

THE

Manchester



Quarterly

AN ILLUSTRATED JOURNAL

OF

LITERATURE AND ART.



Contents.

I. "The Wake House." Drawing, by JACK B. YEATS Frontispiece.	
II. "William Makepeace Thackeray: An Appreciation." By ARTHUR W. FOX	PAGE 205
III. "Concerning Thackeray's Round-About Papers." By JOHN MORTIMER ...	216
IV. "Thackeray as a Verse Writer." By B. A. REDFERN	229
V. "A New Novelist." By J. J. RICHARDSON	242
VI. "Novel Writing and its Attendant Soliloquies." By J. E. CRAVEN	246
VII. "Jack B. Yeats: Pictorial and Dramatic Artist." By ERNEST MARRIOTT ...	255
VIII. "Magic Nights." By J. REDFEARN WILLIAMSON	269
IX. "John Brown of Harper's Ferry: A Re-Study." By WILLIAM E. A. AXON	287

Telegrams :

"Griggs Printers
Peckham"

By Special Appointment



To H.M. the King.

Telephone

Hop 2967

W. GRIGGS & SONS

Limited,

PECKHAM, LONDON, S.E.
HANOVER STREET.

PRINTERS

OF Illustrations and Facsimile Reproductions
FOR Art, Science, Commerce and Industry

BY

Photo- and Chromo-Lithography,
Monochrome- and Colour- Collotype,
Half-Tone, Line and Three-Colour Process.

Estimates and Catalogue Free



Messrs. SHERRATT & HUGHES

BEG TO ANNOUNCE THAT THE FOLLOWING

PUBLICATIONS

BY MEMBERS OF THE MANCHESTER LITERARY CLUB

ARE FOR SALE AT THEIR ESTABLISHMENT

27, St. Ann Street, Manchester.

AUTHOR.	TITLE.	DATE.	PRICE.
WILLIAM E. A. AXON	The Ancoats Skylark	1894	1s.
" "	Life of William Lloyd Garrison	1890	1s. 6d.
W. V. BURGESS ...	Hand in Hand with Dame Nature	1900	3s. 6d.
" "	Cheshire Village Stories	1906	3s. 6d.
" "	One Hundred Sonnets—With Intro- ductory Essay	1901	2s.
W R. CREDLAND ...	The Manchester Public Free Libraries	1899	3s
ERNEST FLETCHER (Edited by)	The Conversations of James Northcote, R.A., with James Ward, on Art and Artists (containing twenty illustrations)	1901	10s. 6d
ARTHUR W. FOX ...	A Book of Bachelors	1899	10s.
ABEL HEYWOOD ...	Norwegian Fairy Tales, translated from the Collection of P. Chr. Asbjørnsen and Jörgen Moe. Illustrated by Bessie Du Val	1895	5s.
GEORGE MILNER ...	Country Pleasures (4th Edition)	1900	3s. 6d.
" "	Studies of Nature on the Coast of Arran. Illustrated by W. Noel Johnson	1894	4s. 6d.
" "	From Dawn to Dark: A Book of Verses	1896	5s.
" "	A Glossary of the Lancashire Dialect, by G. Milner & J. H. Nodal. (2 Vols.)
" "	Bennett Street Memorials: A Record of Sunday School Work	1880	3s. 6d
" " (Edited by)	Gleanings from a Manuscript Magazine (3 vols.)	1875 to 1890	1s. 6d. each

Messrs. SHERRATT & HUGHES

BEG TO ANNOUNCE THAT THE FOLLOWING

PUBLICATIONS

BY MEMBERS OF THE MANCHESTER LITERARY CLUB

ARE FOR SALE AT THEIR ESTABLISHMENT

27, St. Ann Street, Manchester.

AUTHOR.	TITLE.	DATE.	PRICE.
GEORGE MILNER ...	The Works of Edwin Waugh. (3 Vols.) Edited by, with Prefaces and Introductions, Biographical and Critical	1892	3/6 each
THOMAS NEWBIGGING	Sketches in Prose and Verse, ...	1905	3s. 6d.
" "	Literary Bypaths and Vagaries. 8vo.	4/6 net.
CHARLES NICKSON	Belfast and North of Ireland ...	1896	1s.
" "	History of Runcorn. Illustrated by Hedley Fitton	1887	10s. 6d
JUDGE PARRY and HENRY WATSON, Mus. Doc.	Butter-Scotia Ballads	1900	...
REV. G. A. PAYNE	Mrs. Gaskell and Knutsford	1900	3s.
" "	Edna Lyall: An Appreciation	1903	1s. 6d.
" "	Knutsford	1904	1s. 6d.
J. PHYTHIAN ...	Story of Art in the British Isles	1901	1s.
TINSLEY PRATT ...	Persephone in Hades	1899	3s. 6d.
" "	Wordsworth and Rydaland other Poems	1899	...
" "	Puck the Rebellious	1906	2s. 6d.
ROWLAND THIRLMERE (John Walker)	A Woman of Emotions. (Allen)	1901	5s.
" "	Idylls of Spain. (Mathews)... ..	1897	4s. 6d.
" "	Letters from Catalonia. (Hutchinson)	1906	...
" "	The Clash of Empires. (Heinemann)	1907	2s. 6d.
" "	Der Zusammenprall der Weltmächte. (Curtius)	1907	...



Contents.

I. "The Wake House." Drawing, by JACK B. YEATS <i>Frontispiece.</i>	
	PAGE
II. "William Makepeace Thackeray : An Ap- preciation." By ARTHUR W. FOX	205
III. "Concerning Thackeray's Round-About Papers." By JOHN MORTIMER ...	216
IV. "Thackeray as a Verse Writer." By B. A. REDFERN	229
V. "A New Novelist." By J. J. RICHARDSON	242
VI. "Novel Writing and its Attendant Solilo- quies." By J. E. CRAVEN	246
VII. "Jack B. Yeats : Pictorial and Dramatic Artist." By ERNEST MARRIOTT ...	255
VIII. "Magic Nights." By J. REDFEARN WILLIAMSON	269
IX. "John Brown of Harper's Ferry : A Re- Study." By WILLIAM E. A. AXON	287



Manchester Quarterly Advertiser.

JULY, 1911.

NOTICE.—Communications intended for the Editor may be addressed to Mr. CREDLAND, Crumpsall Old Hall, Higher Crumpsall.

Business letters, orders, &c., should be sent to the publishers, MESSRS. SHERRATT AND HUGHES, 34, Cross Street, Manchester.

Manchester Literary Club.

FOUNDED 1862.

The objects of the MANCHESTER LITERARY CLUB are :—

1. To encourage the pursuit of Literature and Art; to promote research in the several departments of intellectual work; and to further the interests of Authors and Artists in Lancashire.
2. To publish from time to time works illustrating or elucidating the literature, art, and history of the county.
3. To provide a place of meeting where persons interested in the furtherance of these objects can associate together.

The methods by which these objects are sought to be obtained are :—

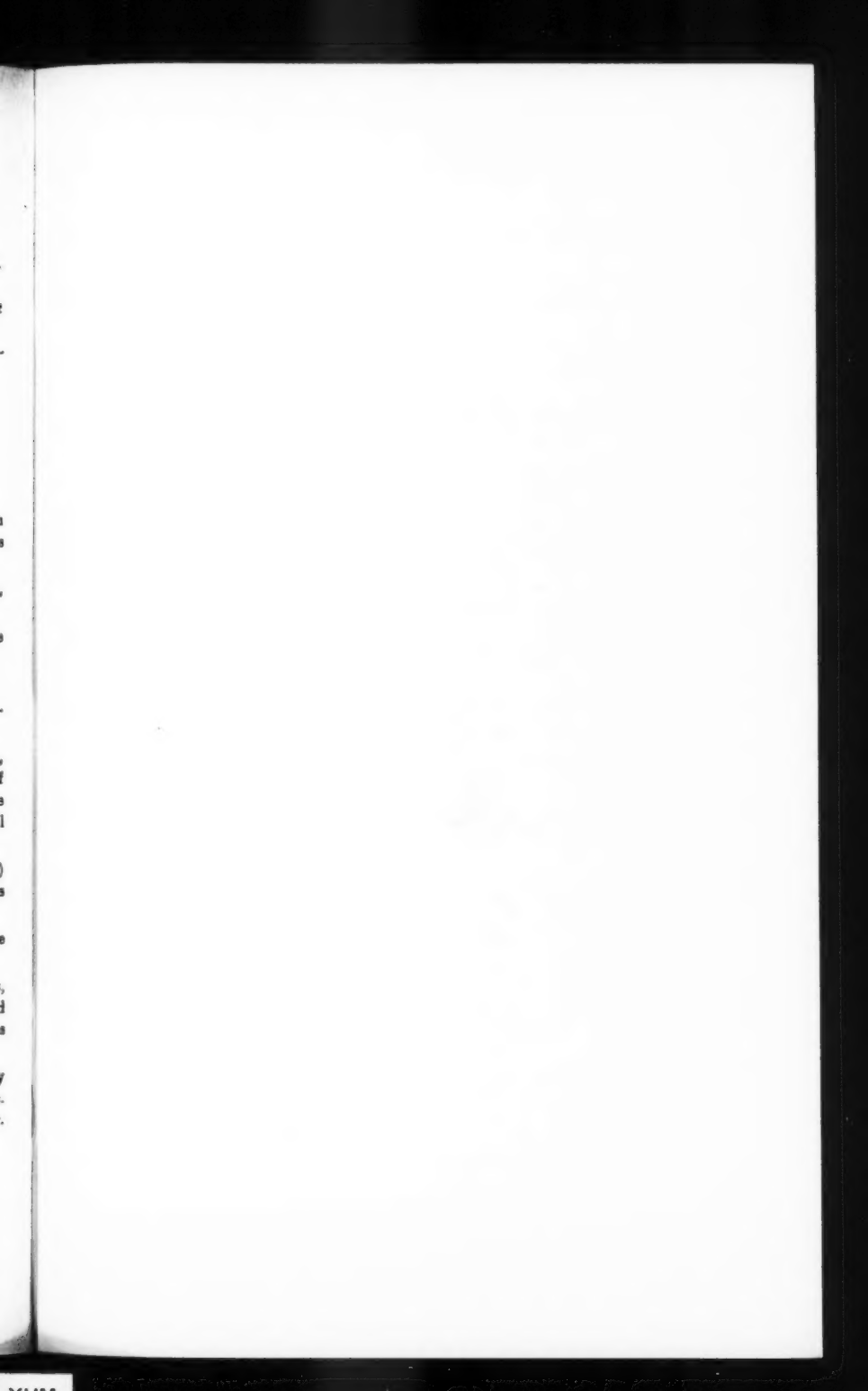
1. The holding of weekly meetings, from October to April, for social intercourse, and for the hearing and discussion of papers.
2. The publication of such papers, at length or abridged, in a Magazine, entitled the *Manchester Quarterly*, as well as in an annual volume of Transactions; and of other work undertaken at the instance of the Club, including a projected series of volumes dealing with local literature.
3. The formation of a library consisting of (a) works by members, (b) books by local writers or relating to the locality, and (c) general works of reference.
4. The exhibition, as occasion offers, of pictures by artist members of the Club.

Membership of the Club is limited to authors, journalists, men of letters, painters, sculptors, architects, engravers, musical composers, members of the learned professions, and of English and foreign universities, librarians, and generally persons engaged or specially interested in literary or artistic pursuits.

The meetings are held at the Grand Hotel, Aytoun Street, every Monday evening during the Session. Each Session opens and closes with a *Conversazione*. There are also occasional Musical and Dramatic Evenings, and a Christmas Supper. During the vacation excursions are held, of which due notice is given.

W. R. CREDLAND, *Hon. Secretary.*

Crumpsall Old Hall, Higher Crumpsall.





THE WAKE HOUSE
By Jack B. Yeats

*Reproduced from "A Broadside"
by permission of the artist.*

Reproduced from "A Broadside"
by permission of the artist.



WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY: AN APPRECIATION.

By ARTHUR W. FOX.

WHEN a man of great genius and piercing perception, added to a keen sense of humour, is endowed with a child-like heart, his writings express an apparent contradiction to his life. His searching sight shews him the shams around him: his single-hearted character impels him to wage fierce warfare against cant and hypocrisy. Hence those who know him only from his works, are apt to misunderstand both these and the man himself. If he be a satirist, he is even more liable to be misunderstood. His severity in lashing vice, his ironical contempt for hypocrisy, his insistence upon the vanity of things merely earthly and selfish, induce his critics to dub him a cynic. They have failed to catch the undertones of tenderness and truth, which haunt his pages like the crooning music of an old-world cradle-song. They confound his mocking exasperation against the hollow and unreal with a general depreciation of human affairs and human virtue. Hence they may easily do grave injustice to a genuinely loving heart, now stirred to satirical wrath, but never unmindful of the "beauty of holiness," when it shows its fair face in daily life.

It has been the hard fate of William Makepeace Thackeray to suffer from this kind of partial judgment. The present year is the centennial of his birth: hence it is fitting to estimate the man himself, that his loving and faithful spirit may be revealed, lest it be lost in the glory of his genius, or hidden in the gloom of his satirical severity. No biography will be attempted, since he would have none. A few hints will suffice to show the lowly

grandeur of his character. His own words describing the last earthly moments of Colonel Newcome could with equal truth have been written of their author:—

At the usual evening hour the chapel bell began to toll, and Thomas Newcome's hands outside the bed feebly beat time. And just as the last bell struck, a peculiar sweet smile shone over his face, and he lifted up his head a little, and quickly said: "Adsum!" It was the word we used at school, when names were called; and lo, he, whose heart was as that of a little child, had answered to his name, and stood in the presence of the Master.

Born in Calcutta on July 18th, 1811, the son of an Indian Civilian who died in early manhood, Thackeray was one of a family many of whose members had rendered distinguished service to their country. His stepfather, Major Carmichael-Smyth, was a true and kind guardian of the boy, while his mother had a tranquil beauty of soul, which inspired more than one of his characters. His schooldays at the Charterhouse, the Greyfriars of his books, were embittered by the tyranny of a stern and not over-tactful headmaster, whom he has pilloried in one of the early chapters of *Pendennis*. We catch the echo of childhood's sorrow in the words long afterwards put into the mouth of Henry Esmond:—

The unhappiness of those days is long forgiven, though they cast a shade of melancholy over the child's youth, which will accompany him, no doubt, to the end of his days: as those tender twigs are bent, the trees grow afterward; and he, at least, who has suffered as a child, and is not quite perverted in that early school of unhappiness, learns to be gentle and long-suffering with little children.

Though his unhappiness at school was compensated by his beautiful life in his early Devonshire home, he fully learned the lesson of which he speaks. He was tender to his own and to all children, for whom he has penned some of his daintiest writings.

From school he passed on to Cambridge, where he made a host of firm friends, such as Charles Buller, Alfred Tennyson, Arthur Hallam and many others. Like his own Pendennis he left the university without taking a degree, though Pendennis repaired his disaster. But he acquired a large stock of varied knowledge and experience, which served him well as a man of letters. Having some means of his own, he studied art abroad without ever attaining supreme success in it. By the loss of his fortune in an Indian Bank he was thrown at the beginning of manhood upon his own resources. For a time his choice oscillated between art and literature: indeed throughout his life he clung faithfully to his first mistress. He made proposals for the illustration of the works of Dickens then first appearing and illustrated many of his own writings. He never allowed his calamity to dishearten him, but set forth with resolute vigour to retrieve his misfortune. He began his literary life as a journalist and ended as one of the greatest of our noble company of novelists. As his elder daughter says, "My father wrote easily, as he talked." Hence his style is remarkable for its power and its purity.

When he first found his feet in the world of letters, he put forth his ideal in striking and memorable words, which will be found in their place in *Pendennis*:—

If Fortune favours me, I laud her; if she frowns, I resign her. I pray Heaven I may be honest if I fail, or if I succeed. I pray Heaven I may tell the truth as far as I know it: that I mayn't swerve from it through flattery, or interest, or personal enmity, or party prejudice.

With such an ideal always before his mind he toiled on, as few men have toiled, true to himself and to what he felt to be his mission in life. He showed up the sins of society around him with fearless force and pitiless humour. He made his characters live: but he stepped into their midst hating and denouncing the wicked and the hypocritical, while he paid faithful homage to the good and

noble. Though the reader, who does not misunderstand the play of irony, may well shrink from the severity of the lash, he cannot fail to be cheered and inspired by such characters as William Dobbin, Helen Pendennis, Madame de Florac, Colonel Newcome, Lady Castlewood and Henry Esmond, to say nothing of the exquisitely drawn Lambert family in *The Virginians*.

Thackeray had his ideal as a man no less than as an author, which is beautifully expressed in the last lines of *The End of the Play*, which round off that fine picture of school-life *Dr. Birch and his Young Friends*. They run thus:—

Come wealth or want, come good or ill,
Let young and old accept their part,
And bow before the Awful Will,
And bear it with an honest heart.
Who misses, or who wins the prize?
Go, lose or conquer as you can:
But if you fail or if you rise,
Be each pray God a gentleman.

A gentleman, or old and young:
(Bear kindly with my humble lays),
The sacred chorus first was sung
Upon the first of Christmas days.
The shepherds heard it overhead—
The joyful angels sang it then:
Glory to heaven on high, it said,
And peace on earth to gentle men.

My song, save this, is little worth;
I lay the weary pen aside,
And wish you health, and love, and mirth,
As fits the solemn Christmas tide.
As fits the holy Christmas birth,
Be this, good friends, our carol still—
Be peace on earth, be peace on earth,
To men of gentle will.

In these fine lines Thackeray sets forth his ideal of character and conduct. In his own meaning of the word

he longed to be a true gentleman. With human failings, but with his great heart beating always with loving kindness, he went far to realise his ideal through his days on earth, many of which were overclouded by trouble and care.

Early in his literary life he joined the staff of *Punch*, for which he did some of his best drawings and penned some of his quaintest verse not to mention the lucubrations of the immortal "Fat Contributor." His letters to his friends were often illustrated by clever and amusing sketches. In themselves they were delightfully written with the object of interesting and amusing those to whom they were sent. To his own children his letters are exquisitely tender. Indeed, as has been said, few men loved children better or understood them more finely. For them some of his happiest *Christmas Books* were written. He knew how to amuse them and never failed to enchain their interest. Just as he was always the life and soul of a children's party, he could write for children. Holding a high place amongst all such books is the immortal *Rose and the Ring*, that most charming of modern fairy tales. It has indeed a clear moral running through it, but the moral is never forced. The rose and the ring conferred artificial beauty upon those who wore them. But they were quite unnecessary to those whose loving hearts rendered them beautiful to one another forever. There is always something noble about a man who loves and is loved by little children. Thackeray had this noble simplicity of soul in larger measure than is given to most men.

Nor had he one drop of the gall of literary envy in his heart. It is not common for one great novelist to praise a contemporary author in the same kind in his works. But Thackeray pays more than once his tribute to the royal genius of Dickens. Passing by the flattering reference in his *Newcomes* to *Oliver Twist*, in 1852 when he was in America, he was asked to lecture for a Charitable

Institution. He chose for his theme *Charity and Humour*, at the close of which he praises Dickens with the glowing warmth of his generous heart. He ends his commendation thus:—

I may quarrel with Mr. Dickens's art a thousand and a thousand times, I delight and wonder at his genius; I recognise in it—I speak with awe and reverence—a commission from that Divine Beneficence, whose blessed task we know it will one day be to wipe away every tear from every eye. Thankfully I take my share of the feast of love and kindness which this gentle, and generous, and charitable soul has contributed to the happiness of the world. I take and enjoy my share, and say a Benediction for the meal.

That is the heartfelt eulogy of a large and liberal mind over the genius of one whom he might easily have taken for a rival. It does credit alike to Thackeray's critical discernment and to his unstinted gift of kindly appreciation.

It is this loving and generous heart which makes the great novelist's life so beautiful, which can be felt beating through almost all of his works. When he wished to paint a perfect scoundrel, he produced *Barry Lyndon* and *Catherine*. These are the only stories of unrelieved villainy from his pen and were designed to be such. Each had its lesson, and the guilty in each were severely punished, while *Catherine* succeeded in killing stories of idealised highwaymen, such as *Rookwood* and *Paul Clifford*, then greatly in vogue. Some too of his pieces are examples of unrestrained humour like *The Tremendous Adventures of Major Gahagan*, which were intended simply to amuse the reader. In 1859 when he became editor of *The Cornhill Magazine*, like most other editors he was besieged by manuscripts of all sorts chiefly unsuitable from all quarters and often accompanied by pitiful tales of need. Most of these he returned with a contribution from his own purse. In answer to one such appeal in 1862 he writes:—

Dear Sir—Only this morning I gave £20 to a literary gentleman from your country. Had I read your letter first, he would have had £10; but he is gone with the money in his pocket, and your note was lying under a heap of others, which I have had to read on my return from abroad. . . . God help us! how am I to answer to this perpetual cry of our brethren in distress? I send my mite, deeply commiserating you, and am your very faithful servant,

W. M. THACKERAY.

Such cases of bitter need pierced his heart and he was ever ready to help them. Anthony Trollope tells of how upon one occasion he said to him: "Poor —— will be ruined, if we cannot find a large sum." "Do you mean that I am to find it," asked Thackeray turning away? Then with a beautiful smile he continued, "I'll be half, if you can find the rest." How much he gave in this way secretly almost stealthily will only be known to the Giver of all good. But he shed light upon many a darkened heart and revived many a faint and drooping spirit by his timely kindness.

Personally he was one of the tallest of men with a noble head and kindly eyes beaming from behind his spectacles. At the *post mortem* examination his brain was found to weigh fifty-eight and a half ounces, thus far exceeding that of the average man. Those same kind eyes could see with piercing insight into the follies and faults of those around him, while his very kindness of heart intensified his severity against vice and hypocrisy. Nor was he by any means blind to his own faults and weaknesses, which he has portrayed in part in such characters as *Arthur Pendennis*, *Clive Newcome*, and *Philip Firmin*. Perhaps because of the break up of his early married happiness he had something of the Bohemian in him and he loved the often selfish comfort of Club-life. When Charlotte Brontë first visited him in Kensington, he was so awed by the severe simplicity of the quiet little lady, that on the first favourable opportunity he made off to his Club.

He found that she expected a stern moral height like her own from him. In that he knew he could not satisfy her expectations and he departed. He was fond of good company and he was a warmly welcomed sharer in the best of his own time. Hating snobs intensely as he did, he was not entirely uninfluenced by birth or rank or wealth. But he never gave his worship to distinctions of this kind: he perceived and denounced such worship as the compound of meanness and folly, which it really is. There can be little doubt, that he was at heart at least as much a sentimentalist as Charles Dickens; though a superficial estimation of his biting sarcasm, his subtle irony, and his keen perception of the vanity of the selfish objects so dear to many leaves the impression of cynicism.

Beneath his caustic humour and his mordant wit to the careful reader a warm and generous human heart reveals itself, beating in closest sympathy with all that is true and good in life. No doubt a strain of deep melancholy runs through most of his greatest novels. That was inevitable in a man of his disposition from his early experiences of misfortune and sorrow. It was quite at the beginning of his happy married life that his greatest calamity fell heavily upon him. His beloved wife lost her reason, leaving him with their two little daughters to train and educate. How faithfully he discharged his duty to them, may be gleaned from the biographical introductions to his works by his elder daughter. Often he would sit with his afflicted wife in the hopeless task of trying to cheer her sadness. Surely he must have had her passing from the shadow into the sunlight in mind, when he wrote his noble words on the immortality of love:—

If love lives through all life: and survives through all sorrow; and remains stedfast with us through all changes; and in all darkness of spirit burns brightly; and, if we die, depletes us for ever, and loves still equally; and exists with the very last gasp and throb of the faithful bosom—whence it passes with the pure soul beyond death; surely

it is immortal! Though we who remain are separated from it, is it not ours in heaven? If we love still those we lose, can we altogether lose those we love?

These are not the thoughts of a cynic but of a truly loving heart, whose faith in the future is firm, whose hope abides unshaken ever.

Enough has been said to show the greatness of Thackeray as a man. He had his failings and his weaknesses, which he was the first humbly to acknowledge. But it is not the fitting time now to

Draw his frailties from their dread abode.

It is for us, remembering that he was mortal like the rest of us, to recall him at his noblest and best, to bear in mind that his warm human heart overflowed with loving sympathy for the way-worn and sorrowful. His religion was simple and earnest, and undisturbed by the niceties of theological subtlety. He spoke little of it, but suffered it to be the moving influence of his life. Like the truly great in soul, he was lowly-minded. Conscious he must have been of the glory of his genius: but his letters show clearly, that he was awed rather than elated by the fame, which he had won. In some respects a shy and lonely man, though courteous to all and genial with his intimate friends, he was most of all at home with little children and young people. These never bored him, as many of their elders did: to these it was his joy to give happiness and he spared no cost of personal effort or expense to bestow upon them healthy and harmless pleasure.

As a son, a husband and a father, he has left an example of tender and wise devotion not easily to be matched in daily life. As a friend he proved himself to be constant, considerate, helpful and sympathetic. Most of his intimacies remained unbroken by aught but death. He was not at home in all kinds of company, some of which, though no doubt exceptionally well-meaning, bored him

to death. We can picture him striving to stifle a weary yawn in the presence of such women as his own *Mrs. Hobson Newcome*, or of such men as *Sir Brian Newcome*. Humbug of every kind awakened his satirical anger. Pretension and vain glory provoked his caustic comment and relentless opposition in his sturdy breast. He looked out upon the world of men and women with kindly eyes, yet with a keenness of perception, which flashed forth into mocking humour, cutting irony and stern rebuke. It may be remarked at this place, that few men have entered into the inmost lives of the servants of great houses with more searching yet more kindly penetration than he. *Jeames Yellowplush* with all his vagaries, his temporary heartlessness and his final happiness at "The Wheel of Fortune" with *Mary Ann* and their family, remains immortal and first in its own kind.

If in his books he has little to say of the democracy, it must never be forgotten that, when he was a candidate for the City of Oxford, his views for his own time were of an advanced Liberal type. In all probability, keen thinker as he was, he would not have succeeded as a politician. He seems to have put his own feeling about himself into the mouth of *Clive Newcome*, when his father was contesting the borough of *Newcome*: Clive says:—

He knows nothing about it: his politics are all sentiment and kindness, he will have the poor man paid double wages, and does not remember that the employer would be ruined. You have heard him, Pen, talking in this way at his own table; but when he comes out armed *cap-à-pie*, and careers against windmills in public, don't you see that as Don Quixote's son I had rather the dear brave old gentleman was at home?

But though sentiment to a large extent ruled his politics, Thackeray cared much for the welfare of the toiling millions, whose struggles he would seem to have understood only in part. By birth and education, no less than

a certain shyness of disposition and a dislike of undue familiarity, he was too far removed from them to understand them as Dickens did. But in his own way he strove earnestly to lighten their hard lot.

On Thursday, December 24th, 1863, in the fullness of his powers and with his energy unspent he passed away just before the dawn quietly and in his sleep. He was a man of the world in the best sense of that often misapplied term. He lived amongst his fellows supremely interested in their doings and caring much for them: nay if he lashed their vices, he loved and wrote touchingly of their virtues. But his thought often went forth towards that other and fairer world, whither we are moving. With a lofty ideal and a noble purpose he did his greatest work and in his own kind he has few peers. "Nevermore," said *The Times*, "shall the fine head of Mr. Thackeray, with its mass of silvery hair, be seen towering amongst us." With deeper feeling James Hannay uttered a truthful eulogy: "He will be remembered for ages to come, as the hymn of praise rises in the old Abbey of Westminster, and wherever the English tongue is native, from the banks of the Ganges to those of the Mississippi." It is a noble tribute, but it is not strained. Satirist as he was of keen perception and piercing humour, he was one of the kindest of men. The heart of "a little child" throbbed in his breast; the wisdom of great genius guided his pen. Peacefully as he lived, he passed onward, leaving a deathless memorial in the offspring of his creative genius.

CONCERNING THACKERAY'S "ROUND-ABOUT PAPERS."

By JOHN MORTIMER.

I HAVE read somewhere of an author—I think it was in the life of Washington Irving, and of that gentle humourist himself who shrank so timidly from all public utterances—who confessed to a great dread of having himself announced beforehand for any spoken or literary deliverance because expectations might be raised beyond his powers of fulfilment. With such a confession, though in a very modest and distant relationship, I must declare myself in perfect sympathy. There is a well-known story of a man who occupied a bedroom in an inn, and who could not go to sleep because of the ceaseless pacing to and fro of the occupant of the room overhead. Driven at last to seek the cause of these unseasonable perambulations, he was told by the restless one that he had accepted a bill which was due on the next day, and as sure as the sun would rise the bill would not be met. "Who then will be the sufferer in that case?" asked the rest-seeker. "My creditor, of course," was the reply. "Then go to bed at once and sleep," was the philosophical rejoinder, "and let that other fellow walk." Now, to put one's name down upon a syllabus always seems to me like accepting a bill which it is possible may not be sufficiently honoured on the date of its maturity. I say sufficiently honoured because, though something may be tendered in payment, it may fall short of the terms of the engagement, and it is not given to all of us to assume a philosophical indifference to the disappointment of an audience. Therefore did it come about that when a Thackeray night was announced, as part of the programme of the Manchester Literary Club,

and papers were asked for, my name did not appear on the list. Indifference to the subject had no part in this attitude of hesitancy; a humourist always appeals to me, and I yield to no man in my admiration for Thackeray. Indeed, I have already dealt with him in the Club, but that is more than twenty years ago. The aspect in which I approached him on that occasion was that of the humourist who presents himself to us as preacher; but now when I am writing these lines, under belated conditions, I am in doubt how I shall deal with him. In one of his essays, Hazlitt confesses to the reader, in the early stage of its production, that though he has begun to write he has no idea how he is going to proceed, or whither his thoughts will lead him. Now, if I have had any prompting to write a few words, it is because I have been reading that volume of Thackeray's which contains his "Roundabout Papers," the lives of the four Georges, and his lectures on the English Humourists. It is one to which I often have recourse and bears evidence of having been handled more than any of the rest. I never tire, and I hope I never shall, of reading his novels, but in this book I seem to have touch with him in ways that appeal to me very strongly. For instance, in dealing with the English Humourists, he shows, not only his wide and deep acquaintance with that department of literature, but his close kinship with the best of those who have produced it, and, as we know, the humourists are the favourite children of literature. That was a quaint fancy—Wordsworth's if I am not mistaken—which represented the author of "Don Quixote," at the general destruction of all earthly things, departing to his own place with his marvellous book under his arm. If you run over in your minds the English prose writers for whom you have the warmest regard—and our tastes should agree—you will find that they are the humourists, and in most cases men of gentle mould, such as Addison, Steele, Goldsmith, Charles Lamb, Washington Irving, and in

more recent days Dickens and Thackeray. There are authors of various kinds—writers on philosophy, history, metaphysics, theology and many other kindred subjects, who, in varying degrees, arouse our admiration or respect, but it is the humourist who gains our affections, the writer who deals sympathetically with the hopes and fears, the joys and sorrows of humanity, who takes up the problem of life, as it were, and views it from all sides; who, while recognising the deep seriousness of it, yet deals with it playfully and smilingly. In those lectures on the English Humourists you recognise how much it mattered to Thackeray what sort of men they were with whom he was dealing; character seemed to weigh so much with him. He is not so much engaged in literary criticism as in giving you literary portraits; it is of the men and of their lives rather than of their books that he discourses, calling upon you to admire, or otherwise, as the case may be; and how keen is his satire when the occasion calls for it, and how ungrudging and generous his admiration when it can be honestly accorded. One is conscious that this method of dealing with authors is not altogether free from objection, and often it is desirable to separate a man's private life from what he has written, but Thackeray preferred to take them together, with such results as we are familiar with. And it has come to him in his turn to be estimated in this way. One of his literary friends, Bayard Taylor says: "I made Thackeray's acquaintance in New York, towards the close of the year 1855. With the first grasp of his broad hand, and the first look of his serious gray eyes I received the impression of the essential manliness of his nature,—of his honesty, his proud, almost defiant candour, his ever present, yet shrinking, tenderness, and that sadness of the moral sentiment which the world persisted in regarding as cynicism. This impression deepened with my further acquaintance, and was never modified. Although he belonged to the sensitive, irritable genius, his only manifestations of impatience, which I

remember were when that which he had written with a sigh was interpreted as a sneer. When so misunderstood he scorned to set himself right. 'I have no brain above the eyes,' he was accustomed to say; 'I describe what I see.' He was quick and unerring in detecting the weakness of his friends, and spoke of them with a tone of disappointment sometimes bordering on exasperation; but he was equally severe on his own shortcomings. He allowed no friend to think him better than his own deliberate estimate made him. I have never known a man whose nature was so immovably based on truth."

We are all familiar with Thackeray's portrait. For my part I like to have it in a conspicuous place. It does one good to look at it, and I like to think that it is the one which drew from Charlotte Brontë the exclamation, "And there came up a Lion out of Judah!" Even that broken nose of it seems no deformity, and detracts not from the dignity of the massive face. It answers to the description which Mr. Bayard Taylor gives of the original. He says, "That hour of the sunny May-day returns to memory as I write. The quiet of the library, a little withdrawn from the ceaseless roar of London, the soft grass of the bit of garden, moist from a recent shower, seen through the open window, the smoke-strained sunshine stealing gently along the wall, and before me the square massive head, the prematurely grey hair, the large, clear, sad eyes, the frank, winning mouth, with its smile of boyish sweetness, of the man whom I know as a master while he gave me the right to love him as a friend. . . . I cannot describe him as the faithful son, the tender father, the true friend, the man of large humanity and lofty honesty that he really was without stepping too far within the sacred circle of his domestic life. To me there was no inconsistency in his nature. Where the careless reader may see only the cynic and the relentless satirist, I recognise his unquestionable scorn of human meanness and duplicity, the impatient wrath of a soul too frequently disappointed in its search for good.

I have heard him lash the faults of others with an indignant sorrow which brought tears to his eyes. For this reason he could not bear that ignorant homage should be given to men really unworthy of it. He said to me once, speaking of a critic who blamed the scarcity of noble and lovable characters in his novels:—"Other men can do that. I know what I can do best, and if I do good, it must be in my own way."

The "Roundabout Papers" are to me peculiarly interesting, not only as revealing Thackeray to us as an essayist but as being among the best things he wrote, and in which one may get the summing-up, as it were, of his philosophy of life. One is old enough to remember their appearance in *Cornhill*, and by virtue of that association there is about them, in the retrospect, something of "the tender grace of a day that is dead." It was of the author's humour that he should assume the attitude of a week-day preacher; of that he is constantly reminding you. This preaching note is in evidence in his first novel. In the preface to "Vanity Fair," as you may remember, there is an illustration which shows a man in motley, standing on a tub, and addressing the gazing crowd in the fair. But Thackeray was not the only humourist who was given to sermonizing, though, perhaps, the first to declare himself a lay preacher. Swift and Sterne did not cease to preach when they began to write, and Parson Yorick could on occasion coin a phrase in "Tristram Shandy," which passing current in the language has, in its origin, been sought for by the uninformed in the pages of Holy Writ. Steele and Addison were week-day preachers of a very pronounced type. You will find many sermons among those essays which they contributed to the *Spectator*, and notably when Addison was the author. In him the humourist and pietist were blended in equal proportions. He could discourse with equal grace upon such light topics as "Ladies' Head-dresses," "Hooped Petticoats," and "The Exercise of the Fan," and upon such

serious ones as "Religious Faith and Practice," "The Wisdom of Providence," and "The Immateriality of the Soul." When Thackeray came to deal with Addison among the Humourists, recognising this preaching tendency in him, he says: "Is then the glory of Heaven to be sung only by gentlemen in black coats? Must the truth be only expounded in gown and surplice, and out of these vestments can nobody preach it? Commend me to this dear preacher without orders—this person in the tye-wig." And as for Dick Steele, has he not, apart from his discourses in the *Tatler* and *Spectator*, left us a monumental sermon in his "Christian Hero"?

The influence of these essayists was strong upon Thackeray, and to be traceable, if I mistake not, in style and purpose, when his own pen was directed to that form of writing. To enable him to write "Esmond" he saturated his mind with the literature of the Queen Anne period, with the happiest results of form and expression, and in the course of the narrative he must needs bring in both Steele and Addison as intimate associates of the central figure in that eventful history. How closely he could imitate the style of one of them is in evidence in the fictitious copy of the *Spectator* which Esmond wrote when, displeased with the conduct of Miss Beatrix, he wished to teach that young lady a lesson regarding her coquetries and flirtations, and it is characteristic of Thackeray in his estimate of the relative merits of the two writers, that he should tell us how "Esmond had tried to imitate as well as he could Mr. Steele's manner (as for the other author of the *Spectator*, his prose style, I think, is inimitable)."

The "Roundabouts," therefore, are Thackeray's lay sermons, with texts of a most diversified kind, and discourses in which humour is blended with the deepest seriousness. Parenthetically it may be said that it is this serious vein in Thackeray which renders him so acceptable to thoughtful and mature minds. Other humourists have,

in their studies of human nature, worked from the outside inwards; it was his distinguishing peculiarity that he worked from the inside outwards. It is no disparagement of Dickens to say that this inward seriousness of our author seems to constitute one great difference between them. Frequently, in these Roundabouts there seems to be but a distant connection between the text and the discourse, for he holds himself free to let his thoughts and his pen wander whither they will, the reader finding, however, that though there may be much circumlocution, there is a distinct object in view, and that he is brought to the true landing place at last. To one who may possibly resent this method he says: "My dear fellow, if you read '*Montaigne's Essays*,' you must own that he might call almost any one by the name of any other, and that an essay on the Moon or an essay on Green Cheese, would be as appropriate a title as one of his on Coaches, on the Art of Discoursing, or Experience, or what you will. Besides, if I *have* a subject (and I have), I claim to approach it in a roundabout manner." So when he chooses to discourse "On some Carp at Sans Souci," and you find that the essay has largely to do with "Goody Two-shoes," a very old lady residing in the workhouse of St. Lazarus, you seem to have started a long way from, and to be but remotely in touch with, those mouldy old carp in the pond at Sans Souci, but you are led eventually, to see the subtle relationship.

When you turn to that dissertation, "On a Peal of Bells," it is to find that the actual bell music is confined to the opening sentence, which tells how the writer is reminded, by the clanging of holiday bells, in a church hard by, "of a July day, a garden, and a great clanging of bells years and years ago, on the very day when George IV was crowned." He is a little boy again, and is lying in that garden, reading his first novel, the "*Scottish Chiefs*." In this way is he led to pass in review many other novels that charmed him in youth, and for whose

authors he has conceived a great affection. For an author to be able to accomplish this he regards as a most enviable quality. Elsewhere, in his "De Juventute," he says, "If the gods would give me the desire of my heart, I should be able to write a story which boys would relish for the next few dozen of centuries. The boy-critic loves the story; grown up he loves the author who wrote the story. Hence the kindly tie is established between writer and reader, and lasts pretty nearly for life." As he recalls those novels and the loves of his youth into whose company they brought him, going over them like one who is ringing the changes on bells, the sympathetic reader cannot fail to find some echo of the music in his own mind. Fenimore Cooper and Walter Scott are among his favourites, the former for heroes of the Leather Stocking type than whom there is none better in Scott, though to that "dear old master" he is indebted for many delightful creations and notably in "Ivanhoe," with Locksley so prominent that his name must be printed in capitals. On the gentler side, and to the heroine of that story, he devotes his closing lines, expressive of his undying regard. "Rebecca, daughter of Isaac of York," says he, "I have loved thee faithfully for forty years! Thou wert twenty years old (say) and I but twelve, when I knew thee. At sixty odd, love, most of the ladies of thy Orient race have lost the bloom of youth, and bulged beyond the line of beauty; but to me thou art ever young and fair, and I will do battle with any felon Templar who assails thy fair name."

Many of the texts from which he essayed to preach were derived from the incidents and circumstances of everyday life. Among them we come upon one on a bad half-crown, regarding which he says: "Before me lies a coin bearing the image and superscription of King George IV., and of the nominal value of two and sixpence. But an official friend, at a neighbouring turn-pike, says the piece is hopelessly bad; and a chemist tested it, returning a like unfavourable opinion. A cabman who

had brought me from a club, left it with the club porter, appealing to the gent who gave it a pore cabby at ever so much o'clock of a rainy night, which he hoped would give him another. I have taken that cabby at his word. He has been provided with a sound coin. The bad piece is on the table before me, and shall have a hole drilled through it as soon as this essay is written. This forgery is so complete that even now I am deceived by it—I can't see the difference between the base and sterling metal. Perhaps the piece is a little lighter, I don't know, a little softer—is it? I have not bitten it, not being a connoisseur in the testing of pewter or silver. I take the word of these honest men though it goes against me, and though I have given two-and-sixpence worth of honest consideration for the counter, I shall not attempt to implicate anybody else in my misfortune, or transfer my ill-luck to a misguided neighbour." Then, in the enlargement of his text, the preacher proceeds to discuss the base human metal that has been palmed off on him in his course through life, the supposed silver which has been tendered to him and which has turned out to be but spurious pewter, and closes his sermon with the words: "Ah, my friend, may our coin, battered, and clipped, and defaced though it be, be proved to be silver on the day of the 'Great Assay!'" How often have I read that Roundabout which has for its title "*Autour de mon Chapeau*," and for the latest time with no lessened enjoyment! This quality of lasting is the truest test in books as in any other form of art. The text and the discourse have come to him at the sight of an itinerant vendor of wardrobes, one of the Semitic race, upon whose eagle-beaked and bearded face there is an expression of tragic woe. He is looking sorrowfully at a white hat which he holds in his hand. It is a recent purchase, and the cause of his grief is the sad consciousness that he has been worsted in a bargain. "He has given fourpence (let us say) for that which threepence would have purchased." Are you disposed to laugh at his dis-

comfiture? The preacher will have none of it. There is something in that grief which, though unintelligible to you, "touches his finer sensibility." "The old clothes man," says he, "has been defeated in one of the daily battles of his most interesting, chequered and adventurous life." After many applications of his text the preacher comes to the consideration of hats which have been purchased at some loss to their wearers. Says he:—

I was looking at a bishop the other day, and thinking, "My right reverend Lord, that broad brim and rosette must bind your great broad forehead very tightly and give you many a headache. A good easy wideawake were better for you, and I would like to see that honest face with a cutty pipe in the middle of it. There is my Lord Mayor. My once dear Lord, my kind friend, when your two years reign was over, did you not jump for joy and fling your chapeau bras out of the window; and hasn't that hat cost you a pretty bit of money? There, in a splendid travelling chariot, in the sweetest bonnet, all trimmed with orange blossoms, and Chantilly lace, sits my Lady Rosa with old Lord Snowden by her side. Ah! Rosa, what a price have you paid for that hat which you wear; and is your Ladyship's coronet not purchased too dear?"

There is not space to give illustrations but, as I have had occasion to say elsewhere, in these papers you have displayed the man's whole nature, his extreme sensibility, playfulness, humour, sadness, satire, reverence, love. As editor of the *Cornhill* his experiences in the editorial chair led him to write a sermon on "Thorns in the Cushion," in which he showed how difficult it was for a man of his sensitive disposition to dispense literary judgments without causing unintentional pain, and giving rise to misconceptions and misinterpretations: as a matter of fact he was constitutionally unfitted for such a vocation. In this wise he sums up his reflections: "Ah me! We wound where we never intended to strike; we create anger when we never meant harm; and these thoughts are the Thorns

in our Cushion. Out of mere malignity, I suppose, there is no man who would like to make enemies. But here, in this editorial business, you can't do otherwise: and a queer, sad, strange, bitter thought it is, that must cross the mind of many a public man: 'Do what I will, be innocent or spiteful, be generous or cruel, there are A and B and C and D who will hate me to the end of the chapter—to the chapter's end—to the *Finis* of the page—when hate, and envy, and fortune, and disappointment shall be over.' Then on the similar subject of scandal he says, "How comes it that the evil men say spreads so widely and lasts so long, whilst our good kind words, don't seem somehow to take root and bear blossom? Is it that in the stony hearts of mankind these pretty flowers can't find place to grow? Certain it is that scandal is good brisk talk, whereas praise of one's neighbour is by no means lively hearing. An acquaintance grilled, scored, devilled, and served with mustard and cayenne pepper, excites the appetite; whereas a slice of cold friend with currant jelly is but a sickly unrelishing meat."

One of the charms of these Roundabout sermons is that the preacher speaks to you as one miserable sinner to another, which is not an accustomed attitude on the part of the occupants of some pulpits. He compares notes with you regarding weaknesses and fallings away, and asks you to rejoice with him that we sometimes escape punishment for our sins. In that discourse "On Being Found Out" he says: "What a wonderful and beautiful provision of nature it has been that for the most part our womankind are not endowed with the faculty of finding us out! They don't doubt, and probe, and weigh and take our measure. Lay down this paper, my benevolent friend and reader. . . . Go to Brown's house and tell Mrs. Brown and the young ladies what you think of him and see what a welcome you will get! In like manner let him come to your house and tell your good lady his candid opinion of you and fancy how she will receive him! Would you have your wife and

children know you exactly for what you are, and esteem you precisely at your worth? If so, my friend, you will live in a dreary house, and you will have but a chilly fireside. Do you suppose that people round it don't see your homely face as under a glamour, and, as it were, with a halo of love round it? You don't fancy you are as you seem to them? No such thing, my man. Put away that monstrous conceit, and be thankful that they have not found you out."

"On Letts's Diary" is the subject of one of the "Roundabouts," and if it had been in my power to write, in however so poor a fashion, after the manner of those inimitable essays, the title or text I would have chosen for my discourse would have been "On a date in Whitaker's Almanack." On the 18th of July in the present year of grace it will be a hundred years since Thackeray was born, and therefore a very notable anniversary. Turning, however, to the calendar of that month in the admirable almanack in question, I find that there is no record of the event, but instead the information is given that on that date, in the year 1881, Dean Stanley died; and that on the same date in 1848 Dr. W. G. Grace was born. Of course, both the eminent Dean and the renowned cricketer are worthy of being so memorialised, but how, one wonders, has it happened that Thackeray should have been overlooked. Dickens is more fortunate, his birthday is duly recorded, and next year will mark *his* centenary. One does not wish to attach any undue importance to the omission, but it opens up the question of the relative popularity of the two great humourists, and this one would have liked to discuss, not in the way of comparison of their individual powers, but rather in the direction of their literary influence. Some of us speak of one of the two as "*Dear old Thackeray*," which is significant, and yet no one has thought of founding a Fellowship in his name. Though it is a hundred years since he was born it is not fifty since he died. I remember well that

Christmas of 1863, and how, when the news came that he had passed away, it seemed as if a shadow had fallen on it and that one had lost a friend. In that far away time he was prominent among one's literary idols, and though meanwhile one has seen him subjected to many cross lights of criticism, nothing that has been said in disparagement of him has in the least altered one's admiration for him as an author or affection for him as a man.

THACKERAY AS A VERSE WRITER.

By B. A. REDFERN.

"And, till I expire,
Or till I go mad, I
Will sing unto my lyre.
Peg of Limavaddy!

THACKERAY'S Ballads, Songs, Imitations, and Dialectal verses, are the least important section of his Works, and many of them may even be considered negligible by the literary student of to-day. Amongst those of his readers still living, who so heartily enjoyed them at the time of their publication, there are few who, reading them afresh, can recall that

"First, fine, careless rapture"

which they then experienced. But even yet, there are none of these verses without interest for us, since they are at least the play exercises of a great literary craftsman, and there are some of them worthy of a place along with the best productions of the Muse, in her lighter moods, in any literature.

Thackeray had his predecessors, as writers of occasional verse, parody and burlesque—to mention only a few—in Colman, Wolcot (Peter Pindar), Canning, James and Horace Smith (of the "Rejected Addresses"), and he had amongst his contemporaries, Barham (of Ingoldsby), Francis Mahony ("Father Prout," who was his fellow-contributor to "Fraser"), and the Bon Gualtier twins, Aytoun and Theodore Martin; whilst he has been followed by a long train of brilliant rhymesters including Calverley, Praed, Locker, Gilbert, the author of the "Arry" ballads in *Punch*, Austin Dobson and Owen Seaman, not to speak of many American contributors to

the joy of nations, each of whom had special qualities of genius, but none of whom have exceeded Thackeray in spontaneity, vivacity, or versatility.

His verses are in many kinds of metre and rhythm, and in most of the recognised forms of poesy, including even epic—of a sort—and they are as various in theme and treatment: sentimental, satirical, ethical, comical, “chiaroscuro, coloured, and plain.” They deal chiefly with the follies, and fevers, the affectations, and fashionable vulgarities of his time; on which they had apparently some slight salutary effect, though it cannot be claimed for them that they had much abiding influence on the course of human affairs, save possibly with one notable exception, to which reference will be made later.

His style is marked rather by its ease, elasticity, and suppleness, than by its energy or vigour, and it often suffers from want of a little revision and correction which he could readily have supplied. The satire is occasionally bitter, but it is more often what Mrs. Gamp desired her drink to be, that is “drawed mild,” and to those of us who have “sampled the brew” of certain other satirists, say from Swift—if not from Juvenal—down to William Watson, its general potency does not impress us as being much beyond that of small beer, a beverage less “toxic” than “tonic” in its effects.*

It is not within the province of these notes to deal with the author's personality, except when a side-light is thrown upon it in his verses as in “The Pen and the Album,” where the Album asks:—

His ways? his thoughts? just whisper me a few;
Tell me a curious anecdote or two.

* * * * *

Quick, pen! and write a line with a good grace:
Come, draw me off a funny little face.

* Since writing the above, I have been glad to find myself supported in this judgment by Thackeray himself. Writing to Locker, he says, “I have a *sixpenny* talent or gift—and so have you—; ours is ‘small beer,’ but you see it is the right tap.”

And the Pen replies :—

I've writ the foolish fancy of his brain ;
The aimless jest that, striking, hath caused pain ;
The idle word that he'd wish back again.

I've helped him to pen many a line for bread ;
To joke with sorrow aching in his head ;
And make your laughter when his own heart bled.

Nor pass the words as idle phrases by ;
Stranger ! I never writ a flattery.
Nor sign'd a page that register'd a lie.

He seldom appears to have taken himself seriously when engaged in making verses, and indeed many of them seem even to be slovenly, whilst the rhymes are frequently like the old lady's teeth, they either do not meet with effect, or they are conspicuously absent. For instance, on the first page of his collected Ballads, the first three stanzas of his longest composition in verse should contain twelve rhymes, of which only six are presented correctly ; five which affect to be such are inadmissible as rhymes ; and in one case, there is not even a show of rhyme, unless the words " tavern " and " tobacco," respectively, may be considered sufficiently related to supply the required nexus. But still there is always something in even the most carelessly thrown off, or inconsiderable of these productions ; a tang, a taste, a touch, for the sake of which the reader ignores their defects.

And here, before referring to many of the Ballads in brief detail, I am constrained to say or repeat that *some* of them have little, if any, interest for modern readers. We could, I think, do without " The Chronicle of the Drum " but for the closing stanzas and a few other scattered lines, out of the six hundred and forty of which it consists. We might dispense with " The Great Cossack Epic,—in twenty books." And we could now spare most of those " Jeames de la Pluche," and " Bow Street," or

"Policeman X," and other "Occasional" Ballads, which some half-century ago were found to be so "vastly humorous."

Much of the spirit and the flavour, of these latter especially, have evaporated in the course of time, and their chief, if not sole, value consists in the fact that they are likely to prove excellent material for the use of some future Macaulay in writing the *Annals* or *History* of the last century; or for that of the coming "New Zealander," who may find pleasure, if not profit, in laying them before his Antipodean Antiquarian Association, in some future age. There are, however, many felicitous conjunctions of incongruous ideas to be found in the quaint spelling of these Ballads, in such lines as these (taken at random) from "The Knight and the Lady":—

And when they've passed an 'appy winter,
 Their opes and loves no more we'll bar;
 The marridge-vow they'll enter inter,
 And I at Church will be their Par.

And an amusing collection of these might be made along with some of the many fortuitous malapropisms which they contain.

In the "Carmen Lillienne"—at one time a great favourite—we see now only some score of jingling quatrains, dealing merrily with the name of a Belgian town (at which the writer was once held in pawn), and in which he presents us with "real" and "bill" as rhymes for "Lille."

The lyrical ballad of "When the gloom is on the Glen" gives us an instance of a certain tendency of his to drop suddenly from sentiment into bathos, and there are others which suggest that the writer often had his tongue in his cheek when he seems to be appealing for our sympathy. Of his ballad, "The Willow Tree," he gives us two versions. We may call them respectively "A Version"

and "A Perversion." Here are the concluding lines of each:—

THE VERSION.

Bleak over moor and stream
Looks the grey dawn,
Grey, with dishevelled hair,
Still stands the willow there—

The maid is gone!

Domine, Domine!

Sing we a Litany,

Sing for poor maiden hearts broken and weary,

Wail we, and weep we, a wild Miserere!

Note the word "gone" as a rhyme to dawn. Should it be pronounced "gawn" as a Cockney would give it?

THE PERVERSION.

Whether her Pa and Ma Fully believed her,
That we shall never know, Stern they received her;
And for the work of that cruel, Though short night;
Sent her to bed without, Tea for a fortnight.

Hey, diddle diddlety,

Cat and the Fiddlety,

Maidens of England, take caution by she!

Let love and suicide

Never tempt you aside,

And always remember to take the door-key.

He has also two versions of Beranger's "*Le Roi d'Yvetot*," and I append a sample of each. The original translated literally is:—"His subjects had a hundred reasons for calling him their father."

FIRST VERSION.

To all the ladies of the land

A courteous king, and kind, was he—

The reason why, you'll understand,

They named him *Pater Patriæ*.

SECOND VERSION.

He pleased the ladies round him,
 With manners soft and bland;
 With reason good, they named him
 The father of his land.

For many others of his verses such as "Bleak and barren was the Moor," and "The Rose upon my Balcony" (from *Vanity Fair*), "At the Church Gate" (from *Pennennis*), and the "Song of the Violet" (from *Philip*), they can be better judged when read in their original settings, where they are incidental to the story, and serve to illustrate—very aptly—the characters of their reputed authors or singers. But they are not fitted to stand by themselves, and thus challenge criticism as poetry.

And now the distasteful portion of my enquiry is over, and I have only henceforth to speak of our author's excellences. And here, for the first example, is a perfect little gem of humourous verse—simple in strain, subtle in essence—which, being short, I am fortunately able to quote in full:—

THE SORROWS OF WERTHER.

Werther had a love for Charlotte
 Such as words could never utter;
 Would you know how first he met her?
 She was cutting bread and butter.

Charlotte was a married lady,
 And a moral man was Werther,
 And, for all the wealth of Indies,
 Would do nothing for to hurt her.

So he sighed and pined and ogled,
 And his passion boiled and bubbled,
 Till he blew his silly brains out,
 And no more was by it troubled.

Charlotte, having seen his body
 Borne before her on a shutter,
 Like a well-conducted person,
 Went on cutting bread and butter.

"The Cane-Bottomed Chair," and "The Mahogany Tree" reveal something of their author's personality, notably his tenderness of heart and cheerful philosophy are clearly to be distinguished in these seemingly artless, but certainly most tuneful numbers. It is recorded of the verses last named, that when Mayhew, on a certain sad Christmas Eve, brought the news of Thackeray's death to the *Punch* staff he said: "We'll sing the dear old boy's Mahogany Tree; he'd like it." Whereat they rose, and sang it with touching emphasis, and with many signs of grief in voice and mien, and we can readily imagine their feelings when they came to the words:—

Here let us sport,
Life is but short—
When we are gone,
Let them sing on
Round the old Tree.

Observe that those words are all monosyllables, and all but one purely Saxon, but how poignant and heart-stirring are they in their brevity and simplicity.

And now contrast these lines of tender emotion with the extravagant absurdities of that world-renowned ballad of "Little Billee," or with those quaint verses (after Chamisso) known as "The Pigtail," which have now become proverbial, and you may then get an idea of the great range of Thackeray's Muse. His "lazy lay," which is known as "The Idler," is worth more than a passing notice, if only as being the fore-runner of much which is now known as "Vers de Société," but it has higher claims to our attention, which time will not permit me to dwell upon. The "May Day Ode" has many noble lines, and striking images; and it is also interesting to us as the sole example we have of our author's powers as an encomiast of those in high places. A Poet Laureate might have written, and been proud of, it.

"The King of Brentford's Testament" is a ballad of

the old style, but concerned with present day events, having an interesting story, two or three surprises, a happy ending, and a doubtful moral—but that's part of the fun—and it is embellished with some of the author's best and boldest rhymes. But it is in "The White Squall" that he exhibits himself, really spreads himself, as a ready and daring rhymester with most weird and wonderful results. The rush, and roar and riot of a Red Sea storm are first graphically depicted, and then in the ensuing sudden calm, overcome by "a feeling of sadness and longing that is not akin to pain,"—as Longfellow has it,—Thackeray gives us this delicious stanza:—

And when its force expended,
The harmless storm was ended,
And as the sunrise splendid
Came blushing o'er the sea,
I thought, as day was breaking
My little girls were waking
And smiling, and making
A prayer at home for me.

Of "Bouillabaisse" and "Peggy of Limavaddy," which are now classics, and safe for immortality, I need say nothing here. The translations from, or imitations of, Beranger, and more especially that of "Le Grenier,"—englished by Thackeray as "The Garret,"—are of such quality, as to make us regret that he did not do more of them; and those from the German of Uhland and De La Motte Fouqué, though not equally happy, have at least fairly earned for him what is known as a success of esteem.

There is however one of these "German Ditties," called by him "A Credo," which deserves special mention. It is a brave drinking song which almost sings itself. Why basses or baritones busy with "locks, bolts and bars," or "bold bandoleros," should not be able to give us songs like this of Thackeray, is to most of us, including me, one

of the many mysteries of music. Listen to these ten lines of "A Credo":—

Goodly people by your grant
I will sing a holy chant —
 I will sing a holy chant.
If the ditty sound but oddly,
'Twas a father, wise and godly,
 Sang it so long ago—
Then sing as Martin Luther sang,
As Doctor Martin Luther sang:
"Who loves not woman, wine and song,
He is a fool his whole life long!"

And now we come to the "Lyra Hibernica," the ballads in the folk-speech of Dublin, as rendered by our author. The most widely known of these is the "Battle of Limerick," of which it has been said that "the Young Ireland party of the middle of last century was as completely extinguished, as was the chivalry of Spain under the open smile and the covert death-stroke of Cervantes; by this masterly satire of Mr. Thackeray." However true, or otherwise, the statement which I have thus summarised, may be, there can be no doubt of the quality of the satire, and of its fitness for the writer's purpose. There is no need for further notice or quotation of it here and now, since the ballad, by ancient prescription, usually forms part of the programme at the Symposium which closes our Election Night, and may thus possibly be painfully familiar to you.

Speaking of the Irish Ballads as a whole, I may say that they are lively vignettes of Irish temperament, character, and modes of expression, which are found very amusing by all English readers (with whom they are popular) but Irishmen themselves do not seem to recognise them as convincing; and though it is not a matter of first importance, they especially object to Thackeray's phonetic renderings of their speech, which it may be readily

admitted are open to question. Here are brief specimens of their quality from:—

THE PIMLICO PAVILION.

O'tis there that the spoort is, where the Queen and the Court is

Walking magnanimous all of a row,
Forgetful what state is, among the pataties,
And the pine-apple gardens of sweet Pimlico.

From THE CRYSTAL PALACE.

For thim genteels
Who ride on wheels
There's plenty to indulge 'em.

There's droskys snug
From Paytersbug,
And vayhycles from Bulgium.

From MOLONY'S COMPLAINT.

O Tim, did you hear of thim Saxons
And read what the peepers report?
They're goan to recal the Liftinant
And shut up the Castle and Coort!
Our desolate counthry of Oireland
They're bint, the blagyards to desthroy,
And now, having murdthered our counthry,
They'e goin' to kill the Viceroy

Dear Boy;

'Twas he was our proide and our joy!

From MOLONY'S ACCOUNT OF THE BALL.

And Jullien's band it tuck its stand
So sweetly in the middle there,
And soft bassoons played heavenly chunes
And violins did fiddle there.

And when the Coort was toired of spoort,
I'd lave you, boys, to think there was
A nate buffet before them set
Where lashins of good dthrink there was.

From *THE ROSE OF FLORA* which is a piece of mazy magniloquence, a clever imitation of the kind of song most popular in Ireland:—

"O Lady Nora," says the goddess Flora
But you're the fairest lady there:
Not all the country, nor Ireland's bounty,
Can projuice a treasure that's half so fair!

Beneath her eyelid, is like the vi'let,
That darkly glistens with gentle jew!
The lily's nature is not surely whiter
Than Nora's neck is,—And her arrums too.

From *THE LAST IRISH GRIEVANCE*.*

As I think of the insult that's done to this nation,
Red tears of revenge from me faytures I wash,
And uphold in this pome to the world's daytistation,
The sleeves that appointed Professor MacCosh.

I gaze round the world in its greatest diminsion;
Lord Jahn and his minions in Council I ask,
Was there ever a government pleece (with a pinsion)
But children of Erin were fit for that task?

And, lastly, from *LARRY O'TOOLE*, which is reminiscent of Lever's "Mickey Free" and Lover's "Rory O'More":—

You've all heard of Larry O'Toole,
Of the beautiful town of Drumgoole;
He had but one eye,
To ogle ye by—
Oh, murther, but that was a jew'l!
A fool
He made of de girls, dis O'Toole.

As we have seen by one or two passing references, Thackeray could, and did on occasion, write verse of a

* A Scotchman named McCosh had been appointed to a Professorship in an Irish College.

more elevated kind than that which so often engaged his playful pen, and in closing these notes I may be permitted to quote a few lines of his in this more serious vein, which appear to be harmonious records of "emotion remembered in tranquility":—

From VANITAS VANITATUM.

How spake of old the Royal Seer!
(His text is one I love to treat on)
This life of ours, he said, is sheer
Mataiotēs Mataioteton.

O Vanity of Vanities!
How wayward the decrees of Fate are;
How very weak the very wise
How very small the very great are.

Hark to the preacher preaching still;
He lifts his voice, and cries his sermon,
Here at St. Peter's on Cornhill,
As yonder on the Mount of Hermon.

For you and me to heart to take
(O dear beloved brother readers)
To-day as when the good King spake
Beneath the solemn Syrian cedars.

In his THE END OF THE PLAY we have:—

I'd say, we suffer and we strive,
Not less nor more as men than boys;
With grizzled beards at forty-five,
As erst at twelve in corduroys.
And if, in time of sacred youth
We learned at home to love and pray,
Pray Heaven that early Love and Truth
May never wholly pass away.

Come wealth or want, come good or ill,
Let old and young accept their part,
And bow before the Awful Will,
And bear it with an honest heart,

Who misses or who wins the prize.
Go lose or conquer as you can;
But if you fail, or if you rise.
Be each, pray God, a gentleman.

In conclusion let me say that if I were asked: Was Thackeray a poet? I should answer emphatically, Yes, and should point to such verses of his as those I have just read, in support of that opinion. And I should add that beyond those powers which might have made him a distinguished poet, he had others, not usually possessed by "bards of high renown," by the development of which, in especial, he became one of the most distinguished prose writers of the Nineteenth Century. And doubtless we are the gainers by the greater use of his pen in fiction than in poetry.

A NEW NOVELIST.

(Mr. W. M. Thackeray's "Vanity Fair.")

By J. J. RICHARDSON.

THE name of Mr. W. M. Thackeray is one that is new to us, and we therefore conclude that he is the latest addition to the many writers of to-day who are finding an outlet for their powers in writing fiction; and that in "Vanity Fair: a novel without a hero," for such is the rather absurd title of his story, we have, if not a first attempt, at least the first which has gained the dignity and prominence of publication.

Regarding "Vanity Fair" as a maiden production, we have every desire to deal as gently as possible with this first effort of Mr. Thackeray, in accordance with our usual procedure of offering every encouragement to young and rising talent, and our eager wish to discover latent possibilities in new writers. Still there are obvious and glaring faults in Mr. Thackeray's work which it would be impossible for us, in justice to our readers, to pass over lightly or refrain from pointing out. And particularly as these, or some of them at least, are such as their author may correct and tone down in any later work that he may favour us with.

Like all young men, he has chosen a model, and he has chosen badly. If he is familiar with our most popular writers of fiction—Mr. Charles Garvice, Mr. Hall Caine, Mr. Phillips Oppenheim, to name only a few, but those of the best—he has certainly not attempted to learn his art from them, or, apparently, even to grasp in what direction their excellence lies.

This is unfortunate for him, and must very seriously militate against his ultimate success. To us it is evident that the model he has chosen is Mr. William de Morgan, and without wishing in any way to disparage Mr. Morgan's considerable ability, his rare humour, his insight into certain phases of character, not to omit his style, we cannot but think that Mr. Thackeray has made a serious mistake, and one which, unless he can correct it, must prevent him ever being known as a popular novelist.

Take, for instance, the interminable length of his novel. "Vanity Fair" runs to no less than 672 pages of by no means large print. It contains some 300,000 words. Now, Mr. William de Morgan's books are excessively lengthy, but this is out-Morganing de Morgan. It will never do, for "it can never happen again" that the public in these highly educated and enlightened days, when through telephones and electric tram-cars life has become so highly speeded up, will find sufficient time to wade through any such mass of printed matter to get at the imaginary events of a story. It is unreasonable to expect it. There is too much intelligence and bustle in life nowadays. A hundred and twenty thousand words is the limit beyond which few of our living novelists venture, and some of them have so refined their art that they can express all that is in them within the compass of a book of 60,000 words. And the more enterprising publishers, like Mr. Heinemann, are now pricing their novels according to bulk in the same way that other traders retail butter, beef and tea; though these latter do vary their prices according to quality.

Mr. Thackeray's youth and his inexperience as a novelist are easily to be seen in the profusion of characters and incidents in "Vanity Fair." There is material enough in this book for an expert craftsman to have constructed half a dozen novels. As an illustration of how thoroughly Mr. Thackeray has failed to grasp the possibilities of his subject, take the most dramatic situation in the book, where Rawdon Crawley discovers his wife alone in her

room with the dissolute Marquis of Steyne, and, despite her plea of innocence, is convinced of her infidelity. The whole scene only occupies a few passages, and we get no subtle analysis of her feelings or of her husband's; in fact we are left in doubt as to whether she has really been guilty. The potentialities of the situation Mr. Thackeray entirely fails to exploit, and we can recall nothing among other and more practised novelists so bald and unconvincing. This is the more to be regretted because Mr. Thackeray is a keen student of character, and impresses us as having made his observations at first hand rather than from books. He has seen life, and his personages are the result of observation, not of imagination, but his tendency is unfortunately towards caricature. Where in real life would you find such a thoroughly bad nobleman as the Marquis of Steyne, or such a wicked, scheming, heartless woman as Becky Sharp? These are not real, they come from the domain of sensational fiction or melodrama. Or, take those weak absurd people Amelia Osborne and Major Dobbin. Who ever met such characters? No, Mr. Thackeray must discipline his penchant for caricature. That he is able to do better we see from his admirably drawn sketch of George Osborne, who might at first be thought the hero of "Vanity Fair." But here again, in his inexperienced, reckless way, he destroys this clever creation before the novel has reached half its length, and does it in an inept and feeble manner. George Osborne dies on the field of Waterloo; the period covered by the novel, we may say, is the early years of the last century, and the following extract shows how Mr. Thackeray describes his end:—

No more firing was heard at Brussels—the pursuit rolled miles away. Darkness came down on the field and City: and Amelia was praying for George, who was lying on his face, dead, with a bullet through his heart.

Could anything be less impressive? Can we think of any

living master of fiction writing so tamely? And in face of the fact that in bringing one of the most momentous battles of the world into his pages Mr. Thackeray had to his hand an opportunity for vivid description and lengthy word painting.

Yet a man, unless it be that under the masculine name is concealed a woman's identity, who writes thus briefly, fills page after page of his novel with cynical moralisings which impede the movement of his story, and tend seriously to lower our estimate of the soul of goodness in humanity. Cynicism and pessimism is, we know, the fashion among many of our young writers, but our advice to Mr. Thackeray is to eschew such a pose.

In drawing attention to these defects in his work we do so in no spirit of carping criticism, but with an earnest desire to show Mr. Thackeray wherein his art is deficient, in what respect he falls short of the standard of artistic excellence so common among living novelists. We do this the more readily because we discern qualities in him which, with wise restraint and careful cultivation, should ensure his success as a novelist. He has gifts which should make him go far, and warrant us in looking forward with pleasurable anticipation to another work from his pen.

NOVEL WRITING AND ITS ATTENDANT SOLILOQUIES.

By J. E. CRAVEN.

THE effulgent Sun, after blazing away all day at the parched fields and crops, and making labour and even ease doubly exhaustive, sank gently in the West, retiring, attended by the glories of gold, amber and purple—looking half ashamed of the sweat and grumbling he had caused, but conscious of his own great power and dignity.

(How will that do for an opening? Novelists generally begin in that way—with the Sun—but why should I? Perhaps it will be better not to be too original as that would probably affect the sales of this book. Why should I say the Sun sank in the West? He never sank anywhere else. He was once stupefied by the sound of a trumpet, but that only made him a bit late. He went to his usual western hangar. But still this is sentimental Rubbish—He doesn't go—He stops and we go. It would sound scientific and pedantic if I said the Sun had calmly watched us dip as usual in the East! Why should I perpetrate such a fallacy? Sales! Sales! I must not forget them. I've a good mind to reveal the naked truth to the world, let the consequence be what it may. No! I'll do that in my next novel out of the profits of this one.)

Watching the setting Sun, sat on a rustic Seat in front of an Italian Garden was Georgina Anstruther Clifford De Bench De Bench.

(That's according to precedent, but how could it be an Italian Garden in Suffolk? Perhaps her ancestors

acquired it by right of conquest before the days of import duties. However I must let it go. I am bound by literary fashion and convention, but I will rebel some day. What about the name? It sounds a bit lofty. A common name would never do. I must give her a stage name, as it were, and these names are chosen because they are aristocratic, nice sounding or similar in sound, to somebody's else's name with a reputation behind it. I think after all the name will do—altho' it may prey a bit too much on the susceptibilities of my reader.)

She was tall and dark, wearing a black flowing dress relieved with suitable other colours and an ample supply of jewellery.

(I am a bit at sea here. I ought to describe that dress and Jewellery in great detail. Was it of the Pompadour, the Directoire or Queen Anne style? I'll get some figure artist to do that for me. I'm told that it is a frequent thing in painting for a landscape man to get a figure artist to paint in a cow, a few pigs or a dog battle. I can't do this detailed description. I am more familiar with the cost; and perhaps am not an unprejudiced judge of what is an ample supply of jewellery.)

Georgina was evidently a woman of considerable culture, for at her feet lay the *Daily Mail* and the latest commercial enterprise of Hall Caine. Her eyes were black and white. I mean the centre was black surrounded by white, which in its turn was surmounted by eyebrows.

(I think I'm getting into the novelist's stride. I can quite see my next book will make a sensation, although this book is merely a range finder.)

Eyebrows! the world has been dominated by eyebrows! Helen of Troy and Cleopatra had eyebrows. Napoleon

had eyebrows, so had Wellington and Sir Robert Peel. We cannot dissociate these facts from history. There they are and we must take or leave them. But when the final chapter of human history is written in the far distant centuries, due dignity and importance will be given to eyebrows—the elevation or frowning of which has changed the world's history and affected many a man's domestic comfort.

(Now that bit is really fine. I hope it is not an unconscious quotation from Shakespeare. It's either his or mine—I cannot think of another author capable of it.)

Her eye could

“Now melt into sorrow, now madden to crime.”

The prevailing expression was one of sweet languor.

(I'm blowed if I know what that means but, like Browning, I want people to assume that there is a meaning and suggest what it may be.)

The effect of this was to incite passion and admiration. But she had another expression which commanded and terrified you. You find the same combination in Queen Elizabeth, Cleopatra, Lucy Walters and Nell Gwynne. Her foot was encased in a dainty boot with a Sorosis Sole and a Manfield Upper, whilst round her waist there was a stout salmon-coloured belt, with a strong buckle, and there seemed no danger that the belt would move up or slide lower down. It had bedded itself in her frame. She looked like a Manchester bale girthed for export. Her arms seemed to be formed for rebellion. She no doubt inherited them from her Tartar ancestors. For although her direct descent could not be traced from those tribes, it is assumed that her genealogical tree, if traceable, would go as far back as anybody's. It began, we know,

originally at the garden of Eden—The Old Ancestral Home.

On this occasion she was restless and agitated as if disappointed. Her glances round the garden showed that she was expecting someone. She went to the sun dial and seemed to want to twist it round a bit to alter the shadow. At length a footstep is heard in the distance, She said to herself excitedly, "He's coming."

(I must break off here and go into the Country to study local colour, for a week. I will not tell my people I am taking my golf bag and fishing tackle.)

The Author being away seeking local colour, missed that interview, but on his return he finds her walking in the garden reading a letter which she has received from her Friend Algy.

She reads,

"Dear Georgy,

"Since I last saw you I have been cursing the Fates which have made me too poor to obtain your hand. As you justly said, "Love has its head in the air but its feet must be on the ground." I despaired for several weeks when hope again sprang to my breast. Three years ago whilst at a country railway station a lady was in great distress, having been robbed of her purse, and having no money to book to London. I begged of her to accept a loan of a £5 note and return it to my address. I heard nothing from her and had ceased to hope that I should do. Last Tuesday, however, a firm of solicitors wrote to say the lady was dead, leaving me a ticket for a Foreign Lottery and that the ticket-owner was entitled to 60,000 francs. This sum, with a small estate consisting of a country house and 300 acres of land pleasantly situated which she also left me, will I hope induce you to reconsider my proposal and now marry me. May I meet you at the sun dial? In addition to this my father is in four clubs, and he says there is a tradition in the family that we have

plenty of money, but it unfortunately has got mixed with other people's, but it is not unlikely that some of it at least will find its way back ultimately to the original Owners.

“ALGY.”

Georgina's first impulse after reading this letter was to tear it up angrily. But she always attributed a great value to tradition. “Why,” she said to herself, “is not History chiefly tradition? Where should we be but for it? How much of the Past could be proved? Nearly all the old things are challenged and have to be given up. What about King Alfred and the Cakes, Wellington's “Up Guards and at ‘em?” And the parentage of Moses?

She folded up the letter and carefully put it in her pocket, saying, “Poor Algy!” She had not been observed by anybody. Nobody was aware of her absence, and unseen she returned to her room which was unoccupied except by her Pekanese terrier.

(Will the reader wonder how I got to know this? No! not in a novel. A novelist is locally omniscient, omnipresent and unobservable. Nobody challenges the sources of his information. I remember a novel ending by the hero going out alone with his gun, and getting devoured in a wild beast's cave after a severe struggle and nothing was ever seen or heard of him after leaving his wood cabin, and his fate was ever afterwards involved in mystery.)

After dinner Georgy was very bright and cheerful. She discoursed with the Doctor on the probability of the inconsequential, and caused the Dr. to doubt cause and effect as a sound line of reasoning, even in medicine. After retiring to bed she fell asleep and slept soundly until sunrise, when she awoke and put out her beautifully rounded arm, and reached from the dressing table Algy's letter.

(This is a remarkable instance of novelist's omnipresence. This power of disclosing what is said and done by a lady in her bedroom must be exercised with great restraint, or there will be an outcry against novelists and perhaps another Saint Bartholomew's Day for their special edification.)

I think therefore I had better leave her alone with the letter, either to go again to sleep, or to get up and dress leisurely, as she pleases, without going into details.)

After a few months interval the Sun was high in the heavens and had begun to dip, but was blazing fiercely on the Sun Dial.

As the local poet Laycock says of the Sun,

“ He's seen some curious Antics
Played down here by th' human race.”

(Had I better cut that out and say it is half past one? No! This is the recognised way of writing. If we cut out the Sun and Moon from novels they might be taken for historical sketches.)

This time the Sun saw her produce another letter. She read it:—

“ Dear Georgy,

“ I cannot in the light of after events blame you for your decision, for it turned out the old lady had only a life interest in the mansion and land which she left me, whilst the Hungarian Lottery was a fraud. I must begin life afresh. It is hard to lose without any fault of our own some of life's achievements, but I must submit and try again to conquer.

“ Yours, ALGY.”

Since the last letter six months have elapsed.

(Novelists can always jump an interval, if they are fast and don't know how to fill it up.)

We find Georgy was again at the Sun Dial. She rested one arm upon it, and with her dainty, disdainful foot, kicked on one side a prominent pebble from the path.

(I think that quite happy—I have abundance of authority for calling a foot “disdainful.”)

She reads slowly another letter which ran:—

“Dear Georgy,

“Things have at last turned. I hope soon with confidence again to ask your hand. I am now a director of a large Coy., formed for the utilisation of the waste substances of the Earth. Lord Impy Cunious is Chairman. I often meet him. From his indifference to detail he evidently reposes great confidence in his brother Directors. He is very affable, but evidently a busy man. He generally has to leave before the meeting is over. We have acquired a large option from an American Syndicate. We are considering whether to operate where we find the raw material or to import it to some English Centre. My Uncle left me a thousand pounds which through the intervention of a friend I was allowed to invest in the Co. In a few months I expect to be able to sell out at an immense profit, and then if you again refuse me, it must be on some fresh ground. Don't forget

“Yours, ALGY.”

Georgy hastily put the letter in her pocket and returned home.

(Here my Mother hands me a letter from Fred. It is :

“Dear Old Boy,

“Come down to Brighton at once. Belle is coming here with such a charming Girl. Belle is producing her latest musical Comedy ‘Ratoutranpus,’ which is a sequel to another recent one on the same subject dealt with from a Calvinistic point of view.” How can I get

away. Oh! I'm run down, and want to study the humble character of the shore—the coast fisherman. But I'll do a bit more at my novel.)

On returning home Georgy played with her dog and then sat down to the piano and began to play some new Music from "Ratoutranpus." She sang and played well. The pieces were catchy and pleasing. Very rollicking and flirty. Georgy seemed to be quite enjoying the music when she was warned to dress for dinner.

At dinner she told her mother that her friend Belle wanted her to join her at Brighton for a few weeks where her friends the Shertons were also staying. The Mother consented, and the next day Georgy went on her visit to Hampshire. Belle had taken there a charming Country House, "The Beeches," for the season. There the two Girls led a very enjoyable and unconventional life. Belle's friend Fred was almost a constant guest, and so were the Shertons. Happily the time sped. After a couple of months "The Beeches" was quite astir. Something unusual was happening. There were signs of a wedding. Belle and Georgy looked charming and happy, amongst the numerous guests on this bright and sunny morning. But lo! It was Georgy and not Belle that wore the orange blossom, and was led to the altar in the village church. As they passed thro' the lych gate she turned her head to look at the old sun dial amongst the graves as if thinking of the old sun dial at home.

Yes Georgy was married amidst great rural splendour, and looked beautiful. Children scattered flowers, the church bells were rung, and all were happy, and nature herself smiled.

(The reader will no doubt think this a sudden and unexpected development. It is—A novelist can kill, ruin and marry where, as and whom he likes. I have taken full advantage of this privilege and instead of

letting her marry that fool Algy I married her myself, and now live at "The Beeches," and have given up novel writing. Being a novelist and having seen so much of Georgy, a long courtship was not necessary from my point of view. In order to hasten matters on her account, I got Georgy to write a short novel, with me as a main character; she called it "Cupid's Capture of Reuter's Agency." This accelerated matters, and we were ready to marry, and did marry, before the story was completed.)

JACK B. YEATS
PICTORIAL AND DRAMATIC ARTIST.

By **ERNEST MARRIOTT.**

THE effects of environment upon the development of genius are noticeable in most instances where a family has put forth a plurality of members showing considerably more than average talent and capability. Ireland has given us many proofs of this, but none more forcefully than in the case of the two remarkable brothers Jack B. and W. B. Yeats—the former a distinguished black and white draughtsman, the latter perhaps the greatest poet alive to-day. Sligo, where they were born over forty years ago, has all the qualifications necessary for exerting a romantic influence to direct and sway the senses and the budding faculties of talented children. Its coastline is indented with bays. The surface of the landscape rises gradually from the coast to the Ox Mountains, and picturesque lakes, ancient caverns, cromlechs and tumuli add enormously to the charm of this antique county in the most westerly province of Ireland.

Although natural surroundings must have had effect upon the boys' natures, there was something more important. The great moulding influence was that of their father John Butler Yeats. This intellectual guide, himself a painter and a very subtle and profound talker, shaped and directed the growing intelligence of his sons. All through their boyhood he talked to them a philosophy of art not unlike that of Nietzsche, and, as it is the impressions that come to one before the age of twenty that really dominate one's life, the results of this teaching can easily be traced in their work. His philosophy made

perhaps the deepest impress on the poet, and even to-day W. B. Yeats finds himself amplifying and obeying it. Sligo, where the boys spent their childhood, cast a spell on them which they would not willingly shake off. To the artist it yielded the men and women he represents in his pictures; to the poet it gave an enthralling interest in folk-tales and fairy belief. Their native land, its history and legends, its condition and its people, have continually occupied the thoughts of the two brothers, and no year of their existence has passed when they have not spent some months in the country of their birth.

It has been said that in the work of every artist of genius there is a peculiar quality of beauty with which he is associated and for which his name stands. Speaking generally, this is true. In most instances it may only become evident after familiarity with many other productions by the same hand. In the case of Jack B. Yeats one feels that there must always have been associated with his personality a compelling and imaginative beauty, if not of line then of idea, sufficiently vivid and original to be recognised by itself. We are told by "A.E." that the earliest drawing of Jack Yeats of which there is any authentic evidence is an eye, and it is entitled "The Eye of a Person." The same writer has recorded that the young boy before he could use a pencil asked his mother to draw a horse for him. She did so, but it was so bad that the boy wept. Soon he began to make drawings for himself. He did an illustrated History of England at the age of ten, and shortly afterwards startled the family with a drawing of a ghost "frightened because it saw another ghost"—truly a precocious development of his faculties! During his hours of freedom he wandered over Sligo, hanging about the quays and mixing with their tarry frequenters, or roaming the country roads and attending sports, races and fairgrounds—anywhere that the human interest looked promising.

His early drawings were mostly of races and hunting. The races in particular must have afforded abundant material for sketches. The Irish peasantry of his boyhood who could swallow and survive the chemical stuff sold as whisky at country race-meetings were a wonderfully hardy race, and consequently notable as types of physical endurance. In a letter describing these early days Mr. Yeats tells me that the sort of race-meeting he frequented was called the "Four pound nineteen." The values of the prizes were under five pounds, and therefore the meeting came under no rules at all. Hence the nickname. There he used to see the old-fashioned whisky tents made of bent saplings and covered with sacking. The tents were long and very low, like those of the gypsies, and the drink sold therein was called "twenty-four hours whisky," as it was made on the eve of the races. Any left over afterwards had to be thrown away as it would not keep. "It turned blue," adds Mr. Yeats, "and trees grew in it." Impressions such as he received at gatherings of this character were valuable to him.

This delightful roaming life continued until he was sixteen years old, when he was sent to London. He studied at several art schools—South Kensington, Chiswick, the West London and at Westminster under Professor Fred Brown. The teaching he received was sufficient to give him a solid grounding in the rules of drawing, but fortunately the language of academic art was not powerful enough to destroy or tone down too much the rare native accent of his work.

Technique merely as technique does not exist for him, yet his drawings are full of the quality that is associated with skilled technical accomplishment, and his work shows a delight in the facility of the medium he has chosen to express his ideas. He is not a man beating against bars in an endeavour to escape out of the present into some different kind of world. He is satisfied with the spectacle of life as he finds it in the west of Ireland.

His Irish types (such as, for instance, those reproduced in Synge's "Aran Islands," and at odd times in the *Manchester Guardian*) are not idealised. They are drawn with freedom and certainty. You are convinced that the hand has correctly interpreted the thought and you are kept continually in sympathetic contact with the reality of his vision. He can swing from a piece done with Rabelaisian gusto to a study in the macabre, or from the jaunty and debonnaire to the sombre and monstrous. No moralist is Jack B. Yeats. Nothing is to be despised. Everything in his net is counted as fish. The drunken tinker, the battered prize-fighter, the fat lady at the fair and the rollicking squire on the piebald mare are some of his best catches. He makes them all yield to him something which has enough in it of the picturesque to fire his imagination like a spark on a line of gunpowder. His sympathy with brute creation makes him refrain from representations of ill-treated or miserable animals, but if he finds it necessary for his purpose to draw a scraggy horse he comforts himself by giving it a wicked eye.

From the beginning of his career as a press artist his humorous drawings have never degenerated into the merely comic. When he was seventeen years of age he drew for some of the halfpenny comic papers, and attended running matches nearly every Saturday making drawings for a sporting paper called "Paddock Life." Later on he worked for "Chums," "Fun," and other papers. These drawings were faggots to boil the pot. Seldom was he free to illustrate the things he himself thought funny. I know one person, however, who thought this early work the fountain head and last expression of humour. No regret could be keener than mine that I have not preserved those halfpenny journals which in early youth I purchased solely for the delight of beholding in all their reckless glory the fanciful figures of Jack Yeats. I did not at the time understand why his work was more attractive than that of the other contributors. It was the difference

between mediocrity and a great talent allied to a Celtic temperament that gave his work the flavour and savour which were so alluring.

Mr. Yeats possesses a remarkable gift of giving a distinct character to all his drawings, and it is an accomplishment which many black and white artists must envy. There is a masterful firmness in his pen-work, a pliant ease of drawing apparently careless in manner but really the essence of a style which is the result of absolute knowledge and a splendid harmony of hand and brain. Although his work demands no effort of appreciation the student can always find something in it to pore over and study. Who else can delineate with such economy of means the great spaces, the rich grazing lands and the "windy corners of high distant hills" of his native country? Who can give you so well a sense of the gay and exhilarating significance of a country fair? Except Jack Yeats no one since Cruikshank has made black and white pictures of mobs in a way so expressive of their blend of animation, humour, stolidity and hilarity.

An examination of these drawings will show that there are no hesitations, no meaningless details, nothing to obscure the structure. No sooner are the ideas conceived than they are put down glibly in lines and masses of black. His pen-line is vivid. It seems as if he lets his hand straggle carelessly over the paper and with a few deft touches and one or two dabs with a loaded brush, builds up our belief in the external reality of his conceptions and puts them before us in a manner authentic and final.

He draws both from models and without models, and has continually been engaged in filling sketch books with rough studies of detail. Up to the present time he has accumulated over two hundred of these books, and has designed many quaint book-plates and drawn innumerable frontispieces.

Contrary to what might have been expected from a

study of his work he never makes pictures of anything he has not actually seen happen. This especially applies to his paintings in oil and water-colour, which, by the way, are not so well known to the general public as they deserve to be. He makes an exception to this rule in the case of his black and white work when he comes to draw designs for the embellishment of toy-theatre plays and other books which he has invented for the delight of all children under ninety. The subjects of his pictures are mostly scenes of life in the West of Ireland. Little of his landscape work is exhibited, as it is usually intended for use as backgrounds for his figures. The original drawings are generally about half as big again as the reproductions except in very crowded designs when he makes them at least twice the size of the intended reduction. His sister, Miss E. C. Yeats, publishes at the Cuala Press "*A Broadside*," which is a double sheet issued monthly at the modest price of one shilling. The contents are worth many times the price asked. Poems and ballads grave and gay, whimsical and grim, are contributed by well-known writers of the Irish movement; but it is valuable mainly on account of Jack Yeats' illustrations which are hand-coloured after printing.

Original as this artist's drawings are, his writings are just as remarkable, and no consideration of his genius would be adequate that did not devote as much attention to the one phase as to the other.

He has published five books dealing entirely with essentials. Together they do not weigh more than a few ounces. Placed flat on top of one another they are not an inch high. Yet within that small compass there is much of the quaint and beautiful; and I would barter a few yards of the sacred books of Eastern philosophy rather than lose from my shelves these precious five. Not one of them takes more than a quarter of an hour to read, but—the inspiriting glory of those fifteen minutes! A glory, too, which can be recaptured again and again.

Should a friend beg a literary loan I say to him, "Borrow any books you like, but do not ask me to lend you my Yeats."

A few shillings will purchase the miraculous batch, and it is better that he should buy the books at a little more than the price of a lawyer's letter than that I should be put to that expense to recover possession.

It may be thought that I am making a fuss over a small matter! Listen to the titles and then say if your interest is not aroused:—

1. The Bosun and the Bob-tailed Comet.
2. A Little Fleet.
3. The Treasure of the Garden.
4. The Scourge of the Gulph.
5. James Flaunty, or the Terror of the Western Seas.

(All published by Mr. Elkin Mathews.)

The first-mentioned is a saucy narrative telling how Billy the Bosun, after being paid off by his ship, bought a stout pony and galloped along quite happily until he met a comet. Discarding his horse, he bridled the comet and rode it over the countryside. "Of course," says the story, "people were rather astonished. Then the tail of that silly little comet used to catch in the tops of the trees, until the Bosun made it shorter by tying it in a knot." What happens after this should be read in the book itself, which is printed in heavy black type and has an illustration on each page. The drawings are vigorous and have the severity of old-fashioned woodcuts.

"A Little Fleet" is a description of the various toy-boats made by young Jack Yeats and his chums. The narrow winding stream and small pond at their disposal are magnified into a wide and treacherous river, full of whirlpools and snags, and running under beetling cliffs. "The Monte was the first of our vessels and was made out of a flat piece of wood about five inches long. She had two masts and was rigged as a fore and aft schooner. . . . She started from No Name Straits with wind and tide . . .

and bore away for mid-stream to avoid the *nifty* snags that lie at the foot of the bluff called Pirate's Leap, called that because a poet who had been a pirate was thinking about a poem when he ought to have been shoving the vessel off the rock, and so he fell in." Another vessel they built was the *Moby Dick*, a steamboat with a cocoa-tin as paddle-box:—

She sailed down Gara valley,
She startled all the cows;
With touchwood in her galley
And green paint round her bows.

This boat did not live long, and eventually

She came to flying anchor
At the twilight time of day,
But the strain on the cable sank her;
And the crew, oh, where were they?

Other vessels constructed were The *Theodore*, a fireship; The *Pasear*, a top-sail schooner; and The *New Corinthian*, who had little in the way of adventures until "the Tadpoles tried to board her!" The quaintest verses in the book are those by the pirate poet who fell off the bluff:—

And now by Gara rushes
When stars are blinking white;
And sleep has stilled the thrushes,
And sunset brings the night;

There where the stones are gleamin'
A passer-by can hark
To the old, drowned "Monte" seamen
A-singing through the dark.

There where the gnats are pesky.
They sing like anything,
They sing like Jean de Reszke,
This is the song they sing:

* * * * *

Our bones are green and weeded,
Our bones are old and wet;
But the noble deeds that we did
We never can forget.

The remaining three booklets are plays written for a toy stage measuring twelve inches across. For those who wish to experience the rewards and successes and the pains and penalties of theatrical management there are special issues of the plays with instructions how to colour the scenes and characters. Also there are fascinating particulars such as those given in the introduction to "The Treasure of the Garden"—how before pasting the last scene on a card you must cut a piece out of the board to correspond to where the moonlight falls on the water. This is so that at the moment when McGowan, the man-hunter, rises out of the pit with the crock of gold in his arms a candle may be held behind the scene to shine through the paper and illuminate the track of the moon.

Those who produce these dramas will discover many compensations. No licence is required, no fees have to be paid, and a submission to the censor is not necessary. As to the plays themselves, if you have not yet made their acquaintance, enchantment awaits you. Turn to the beginning of "James Flaunty," and immediately you will find yourself on the verge of great happenings. The scene opens on the West African coast. A frigate is lying at anchor in a creek. The background is a line of palms. Beach-combers attack the fibreless William Pine, who swears he has no money of which to be robbed. Enter James Flaunty, the terror of the western seas, dressed in baggy trousers, top boots and gaudy sash. With drawn sword he advances and the crowd retires slowly before him.

"Will ye back, or will ye not?" he roars. "Back, I say, creek rats! or let each man wait and see me spit his fellow on this sweet sword."

Later on Lieutenant Florry of H.M.S. The Cormorant, endeavours to secure Flaunty's services to lead the pig-tailed sailors to where the pirates' ships lie hidden.

Flaunty: Then you are in certain earnest

This is to be a crushing blow?

Lieutenant: Aye, a crusher; every gun double-shotted, every man full of fight. We have a crew, Mr. Flaunty—ah, such a crew! The cream of fighting men, picked from four frigates on these coasts. Not boys, you understand me, but toughened men. Men who have hung by Scraw Wallaw—the shaking Scraw that hangs o'er the mouth of Hell—and come back again.

Scene 2 is in the parlour of the Inn. Nance, the inn-keeper's daughter, wishes to warn Flaunty of the danger of the enterprise:—

“O cruel Jim, every one of them quicktraders has a *sashful of swords*. How many have tried to wipe them off the coasts! They came the quick, they went back the dead.”

Flaunty, however, is built of the stuff of heroes. “What of that, Nance, 'tis but the chance of war. If I come back alive, fifty guineas; If I die, a round shot and a canvas bag.” So the whole play goes on with scuttling, pillaging, treachery and murder to a brave finish. The illustrations are wonderful; with a few lines everything essential is expressed in a lurid but highly artistic manner. Particularly striking is the picture of the dripping pirate, Eldorado Gillen, emerging from the trap door with the glare of a fiend in his eyes.

One of Mr. Yeats' most attractive designs is reproduced in “The Scourge of the Gulph.” It is almost lyrical. Captain Carriknagat, a black bearded buccaneer, reclines in an elegant attitude by the cabin table at the right of the stage. Through the open cabin window can be caught a distant glimpse of the Isle of Plumes. Three cutlasses

hang on the wall, and the deck-beams overhead and the flooring boards are done with long sweeping lines which carry the interest to the principal figure and give a feeling of rhythm to the scene. The plot is as follows: The captain hears that his wife is captured and eaten by cannibals. Bosun Broad has escaped with the loss of an arm and brings a letter from the unfortunate lady containing a last request that the captain should find her remains, take her skull and bear it away in a black box with silver hinges to their Island of Plumes, there to bury it on the round hill. Off the captain goes in search of the skull. Scene 3 is the Grove of Heads on Savage Island. Enter Captain and Bosun.

Captain: None of my brave crew are left; and how bravely they went through the savages, they went through the first pack like the shuttle through the loom. My ship is sunk: I piled her on the coral, and now she lies with 50,000 pieces of eight in her.

Only the Captain and Bosun are left and still they pursue the quest of the skull. Eventually they find it and bear it away. On the Isle of Plumes after the Bosun has died of the black thirst the disconsolate Captain apostrophises the universe in terms of utter melancholy, never forgetting, however, to introduce a literary flavour into his monody. While digging a grave with his sword he speaks of the skull as "this sad piece of ivory." His end is swift and sudden and the play ends on a note of interrogation. Joe Miles, who was marooned in the first act, appears while the Captain is occupied in his task.

Miles (seeing the Captain, and thinking there is treasure in the box): At last! there he stands. How long he has been a-coming; but now he's in my power. I'll settle him with the old piece, break open the box, and then the people who thought him a buccaneer will laugh to see what I'll bring them to. Oh, what a fine revenge. I have waited for him, living on what I could pick up in the woods, and

many a gaudy parrot fell to my gun—here goes for a gaudier! (*Fires, Captain falls. Miles goes over and presently is seen on his knees at wings with box open, holding up skull*). An empty skull, a black box, a dead skipper! Have I done anything or nothing?

Curtain.

Mr. Yeats has also written the following: "Esmeralda Grande," "James Dance or the fortunate ship-boy," "The Mysterious Travellers or the Gamesome Princes and the Pursuing Policeman" (a pantomime). So far they are unpublished, but he has produced them on his own private stage—a fairly large one for cardboard theatricals, about four feet across and the characters eight inches high.

These diminutive dramas shew something of the fanciful simplicity and directness of phrase which we find in the work of the better-known dramatists of the Irish movement. Indeed there seems no adequate reason why one of them should not be performed on the public stage as a curtain raiser to a burlesque play. I make a present of the suggestion to the Horniman company. There is, I submit, no doubt that the plays have literary quality. To supplement the specimens already given here are a few from "The Treasure of the Garden." Bosun Hardbite addressing McGowan who is seated on a mooring post on the quay says, "Sit there on yer old iron mushyroom till the seaweed grows on you." An Emigrant replies, "The poor captain is feeling sad in his heart. The poor man, like the rest of us, doesn't like leaving the dear silk of the kine." At the beginning of the drama the captain ruminates, "What a roaring life it is too, chasing the rich ships—the big fat pigeons with crops full of gold. But it's the other thing that sickens—fighting two great ugly frigates in a little ditch of a creek. . . . they fall across you and lie on you like a dead horse." The impressive scene where he makes this speech is a battered deck with bullet-riddled pirates hanging from the shrouds in the last horror of bodily death.

In arranging these plays for acting, Mr. Yeats has shown himself to have something in common with Mr. Gordon Craig who has "rid the stage of antiquarian accuracies and replaced dead pedantry with poetry." Craig realised that theatrical representation needed simplifying. Many obscuring twigs needed lopping off the parent tree to show the majesty of large but simple effects; also how form and colour controlled by the designer intensified and heightened the dramatic beauty of the play. The costumes, gesture and grouping were details which he brought into harmony with the simplified basic structure of the theatrical scene.

So with the settings of Mr. Yeats' plays we find broad masses and an insistence on the lines being well-defined so that no swamping with detail should distribute the interest and smother the imagination. He has taken Old Crome's advice to his son, "John, my boy, if your subject is a pig sty—dignify it." His enthusiasm for the theatre is obvious, he has at his finger tips the mysteries of its craft and his plays should give the right kind of audience the right kind of dramatic throb. For subjects he uses the figures of ancient popular melodrama, but there is a difference when they have passed through his alembic. They have been broken to pieces, trimmed here and there, glued up again, carved afresh into something new and strange and made to fall into harmony with their backgrounds with a rhythm and balance of pose which makes for absolute dramatic congruity. They are still melodramatic but the romantic reality sublimates the melodrama and it becomes vital and stirring to the imagination. To some extent the success of these small tragi-comedies depends on the sympathetic understanding and high seriousness brought to bear on them by the reader. To all such readers these valiant figures and scoundrel-heroes will appeal. Veritable legs of the devil, some of them, to whom existence is a jest and exuberance normality, they still are, after all, the creatures of a

departed age. No pale phantoms nor shadowy visitants are they, however. Their grip on us is real and our hearts beat in sympathy with them.

Jack B. Yeats is a distinguished craftsman in two arts. His paintings and drawings are a true expression of the Celtic mind. In the main his black and white works are decorative in composition. They show a nice disposition of masses and great flexibility and sprightliness of line. A general harmony of matter and manner fusing all the qualities lifts, as it were, the whole work complete and places it full square to the observer in the realm of imaginative truth. Animated, in some drawings, by an almost passionate gaiety he can, if necessary, represent the sepulchral and tragic. Full of humour when depicting the jovial characters who rollick in the pages of the "Broad-sides," he can, when he likes, change to the acid and sardonic. His plays are for an uncommercial theatre whose gate-money is not the measure of its success, whose traffic is with the things of the mind, whose commerce comes and goes in golden little galleons of old romance.

It is a great delight to him to draw pirates with plenty of glue and footlights about them, but he would always have you remember that he is a serious artist. When making the drawings for these plays he is not serious; he is out for a frolic in relaxation of a rule he has made for himself—that is, to paint only the things he has really seen happen. "A sure-enough pirate," says Mr. Yeats, "has never yet happened to me." It is a statement difficult to believe of one who in his drawings and plays has distilled for our delight the essence of buccaneering and piracy, given us happy glimpses of blue breakers and palm-clad islands, and taken our breath away with the salt breeze of the Spanish Main.

MAGIC NIGHTS.

By J. REDFEARN WILLIAMSON.

THE story of taverns truly told, from the time when the natal star, burning in the cloudless midnight blue, drew the wise men of the East to the little inn at Bethlehem, would be the most alluring and absorbing narrative ever written, for it would be the tale of life itself.

Wherever placed, whether in country or town, the inn touches humanity at all points. It is a mirror of manners, and reflects the social and political changes of the day. It is the centre of many activities: the appropriate stage of tragedy and comedy, and stands on the highway to show what a waif man is when away from his own hearthstone. With doors open as the market-place, it is the fitting retreat for secret conclaves, plots, and assassinations. In its rooms are held solemn councils, and it shares with the barber's shop the honour of being the gossip's favourite haunt. Its sign is often a symbol of the transitoriness of all sublunary things, as well as an invitation to good cheer, but there have been times in England when the inn was considered synonymous with the stability of the State, and men paid respect to Boniface as to a bishop. Mine host was Sir Oracle, and in him was stored the lore of all the ages. He generally looked wiser than any man could be, and his nod was more profound than Lord Burleigh's: even to day John Willets are not quite extinct. But from taverns and landlords the ancient glory has departed, and yet, if by some magic process the universal inn could suddenly be made to disappear, it would be commensurate with blotting out a constellation from the sky. To the wandering Bohemian,

the bibacian, flying lovers, runaways from justice, and painters of stirrup-cups, soldiers' rendezvous, and village fêtes, it would be like the days of chaos come again, when the earth was without form and void.

But try to imagine the result if by some wizard-craft or sorcery the inn were instantaneously eliminated from literature! Think of the huge cantles carved out of Chaucer, Shakespeare, Cervantes, Burns, Goldsmith, Smollet, Dr. Johnson, Sir Walter Scott, and Charles Dickens; of inimitable scenes in Goethe, Victor Hugo, Dumas, Longfellow and Robert Louis Stevenson entirely obliterated; of *A Sentimental Journey* without Monsieur Dessain, or the auberge of Montreuil; of a thousand and one captivating passages whose absence would make the riddled page like a sieve, full of holes. The mind boggles at the thought: the bare idea is a blank horror.

That a great deal of sentiment has been wasted on the time-worn institution may be granted; but the mere mention of a wayside inn has for me a fascination that I cannot convey in words. It brings pleasant memories of sunny lands, vine-clad arbours, snatches of song, and cheerful companions. Vanished faces reappear, and I hear again voices long ago hushed for ever. In retrospect the cheerful hostelries wherein I have sojourned are pictured as delectable oases in the journey of life. The disagreeable ones are obliterated in the dark corners of the mind. And sometimes as I muse on past experiences and adventures, the actual houses I have stayed in are so blended with the inviting taverns of romance, that I am puzzled how to discriminate between them, or say which is real and which imaginary. The posada where the unfortunate Sancho was tossed in a blanket is much more substantial to my vision than the up-to-date hotel in London I occasionally visit, where they don't even toss a pancake in public.

But I can recall a few that did visibly exist in brick or stone, where the welcome was genuine, the entertain-

ment good, and the charges reasonable. At one of these, an old fashioned London house long since pulled down, there was staying, like myself for a night only, one of the most interesting men I ever met. Of a good family, an Oxford man, I forget which college, and a foreign office official going out to the interior of Africa next morning, he proved a most entertaining companion at dinner. Though young in appearance, he was prematurely bald, and I learned later that he had gone the pace with the fastest. After dinner a number of us drifted to the smoking room, and while the majority had coffee, he ordered a full bottle of whisky. During the ensuing desultory conversation, mostly on literature, he displayed an intimate acquaintance with modern poetry and old ballads. Once, however, he tripped over the authorship of "The Death of Featherstonhaugh"; and afterwards tried to restore his self-esteem by asking me, with an engaging air of innocence, if I did not think that "Cumnor Hall," in Kenilworth, was Scott's most pathetic ballad.

When the rest of the guests had gone to bed, more than half the whisky had vanished too. Pouring out a liberal measure, he began to relate his exploits in the African bush. He told me the post he was going to, for the second time, was three hundred miles from any European, in the heart of the forest. Of climate, wild beasts, or blacks, except one tribe, he had no fear whatever. The tribe in question he dreaded above all things because in fighting they used tiny poisoned arrows, resembling, as I understood, those shot from Ujit blow-pipes in the Campong jungle of Sarawak, described by Frederick Boyle. Sending to his room, he showed me a garment designed by himself. In shape it was like a surcoat, padded back and front with fleecy wool, and quilted like a Mandarin's winter robe. With this round his body he felt safe from attack, and on my enquiring how he protected his face, he laughingly replied that his only anxiety was for the magazine where the rations were stowed.

At one o'clock in the morning our talk came to an end; so did the Glenlivet. Rising from his chair, he rang the bell for the waiter, to whom he said: "I want you to take another bottle of whisky to my room." "Yes sir," replied the waiter in a hesitating manner, "I'll bring it to your room shortly, sir." "No, no," was the response, "that won't do, my friend. I see you think I have drunk too much already, and that I want more. But I don't. Bring a bottle at once, take it upstairs and put it on the chair near my bed. At six, sharp, come and rouse me, and don't forget to bring a jug of cold water and a corkscrew." The order was carried out, and my quondam acquaintance and I said "good night," and parted on the landing.

Since that evening I have not seen or heard his name, but I often wonder whether he escaped all dangers, or became a victim to one of the venomous darts that found a vulnerable spot where the ingenious cuirass was no protection, and now lies in an unknown grave under the equatorial sun.

Turning over the leaves of memory, I see a page of delightful reminiscences of Venice; where my temporary home—a rambling, comfortable old place, instead of being a wayside—was a waterside inn, built on the edge of the Grand Canal. Of the fascinating days of my stay I can only say they resemble a romantic dream. I think of myself as wandering through the enchanted city under a spell, seeing churches, palaces, picture galleries, campanili, the horses of St. Mark, and the pillared lion, through a veil of golden mist. Without change, the graceful gondolas glide on the silent waterways under balconies and bridges whose every stone has a story; and the warm Spring sunshine touches with softened splendour the mellow marble walls that were white from the quarry a thousand years ago. Though we all know the tricks imagination, at times, plays with us, it would be difficult

to persuade me that I did not see Jessica tripping along one morning, and stopped to watch her feeding the pigeons in St. Mark's square. Nor should I have been at all surprised to see blind Dandolo gravely stepping down the Grand staircase of the Doge's Palace. And I am sure Dipsychus came the next afternoon and had an ice at my table on the Piazza in front of Florian's café, because, as we watched the gay cosmopolitan crowd passing to and fro, I heard him humming:—

As I sat at the café I said to myself,
They may talk as they please about what they call pelf,
They may sneer as they like about eating and drinking,
But help it I cannot, I cannot help thinking,
 How pleasant it is to have money, heigh ho!
 How pleasant it is to have money.

We sit at our tables and tipple champagne;
Ere one bottle goes comes another again;
The waiters they skip and they scuttle about,
And the landlord attends us so civilly out.
 So pleasant it is to have money, heigh ho!
 So pleasant it is to have money.

A gondola here, and a gondola there,
'Tis the pleasantest fashion of taking the air.
To right and to left; stop, turn, and go yonder,
And let us repeat, o'er the tide as we wander,
 How pleasant it is to have money, heigh ho!
 How pleasant it is to have money.

On these speculations and the entrancing beauty and witchery of the queen city of the sea, it is tempting to dwell; but I must resist the seductive temptation, and instead try to describe a ceremonial pageant that shines on the background of the past like a rainbow blazoned on a bank of purple cloud. For time and chance coincided, without collusion on my part, to make me a witness of the memorable meeting between the King of Italy and the Emperor of Germany. The coming interview had been

arranged months before, and the Venetians, who of old were adepts at stately shows and panoramic processions, were soon actively preparing a series of appropriate fêtes intended to rival in picturesqueness the magnificent festivals of the ancient days.

The preparations were in active progress when the nation was stunned by the news of the battle of Adowa, where, caught in a trap, the Italian army, in spite of heroic bravery, was almost exterminated by the Abyssinians. The effect on the community was like a stroke of paralysis; and though the people bore the blow with admirable fortitude, the numbing influence of the disaster was perceptible weeks afterwards in all ranks of society.

Under these depressing conditions many festivities were cancelled, and others greatly curtailed; but gradually the buoyant spirits and love of spectacular display inherent in the Venetians asserted themselves, and on the evening of the appointed day Venice was adorned like a bride. More than any other city she lends herself to decoration, and she needs it less than any city in the world. In the brave days of her republican freedom she witnessed many scenes of semi-barbaric pomp, but Nature and art have so conspired to invest her with loveliness and charm, that any temporary bedizening has the appearance of a superfluity. And perhaps, in the near future, this dreamy resting place will be the only spot on the habitable globe where the hoot of the motor horn is never heard.

The Hohenzollern, with the Kaiser on board, was expected to arrive between eleven and twelve in the forenoon, and throngs of people in holiday dress were early astir on the Piazzetta and other coigns of vantage where a good view could be obtained. Threading my way to the landing steps, I found that everything floatable was already hired, so took the miniature steamboat and sailed up the Lagoon to the Lido, the long narrow island fronting the Adriatic, where Byron used to ride, but now better

known as a fashionable bathing resort. On a sandy spit of land I sat down to wait. The last wreaths of pearly haze trailed over the horizon's rim as the sun soared higher and higher, and the whole ravishing vista of mountains, sea, and city was revealed like an apocalyptic vision. So still was the air that all creation seemed asleep. The fishing barks dotted here and there on the smooth expanse were motionless, and their weather-worn sails, in exquisite tones of brown and yellow, pinky-orange, white and red, hung limply from the masts, making reflected patches of vivid colour in the burnished mirror of waveless water.

While waiting on that bent-covered knoll, the picture I beheld grew strangely dim and remote, and another scene presented itself to my mind's eye. It is a sultry July day in the year 1177. On this same island of Lido a man of martial mien, surrounded by men-at-arms, is watching the approach of six Venetian galleys. The man is Frederick Barbarossa, Emperor of Germany, and nearly conqueror of Italy. The keels grind on the shingle, and the Doge, attended by a gorgeous retinue, conducts Frederick to the State barge, and rows him in great pomp to the capital. At the quay of the Piazzetta Frederick alights, and the Doge, followed by the patriarch, bishops, clergy, and people with standards and crosses, walks before him to the church of St. Mark, where the Pope of Rome, with cardinals and archbishops, is already seated in the vestibule of the basilica. Frederick, throwing aside his imperial mantle, prostrates himself at the Pontiff's feet, and, after being raised and kissed by the Pope, receives the benediction, and retires to the ducal palace. The following day he again appears in the cathedral in the humble role of a verger. The church is packed to the doors, and Frederick, standing by the pulpit, hears the Pope preach a sermon at him as the prodigal son. After the chanting of the creed, the Emperor makes his oblation, kisses the Pope's feet, receives his blessing, conducts

him from the church, and holds the stirrup as he mounts his horse, and then passes out of sight.

When my wandering thoughts returned from their long journey, I wondered very much whether the expected guest and master of many legions would humble himself in like manner before the present occupant of the Papal chair. I also discovered that it was long since past noon: that there was no sign of the imperial yacht: that I was very hungry, and my inn was far away. But the Lido is no barren land: it produces good restaurants, where the pilgrim can be refreshed and comforted, and one of these I found equal to the heart's desire.

At length the Hohenzollern was sighted, and wishing to view the historic advent from a good position, I joined the returning toy steamer, and was soon back again in Venice. But there was no reaching the landing stage through the ruck of boats, jammed and squeezed against the sea wall to make a clear course, and we were quickly wedged in the mass like a polar expedition in an ice pack. The outlook was an ideal one. Far as eye could travel to left and right the roofs and windows of palaces and houses were filled with animated sightseers, and midway of the Lagoon in front, the unobstructed sunlit course, more than a mile in distance, was lined three or four deep with a double row of gondolas.

Slower and slower, nearer and nearer, came the big white Hohenzollern, creeping to her anchorage opposite the public gardens. Presently the state barges, containing the civic dignitaries and the Kaiser and his suite were seen coming down the centre of the waterway, their prows glittering and flashing in the rays of the declining sun. The boatmen themselves were arrayed in exact copies of the rich, antique garb worn by the men who rowed the great Barbarossa eight hundred years before, and their oars swung together in rhythmic strokes that rose and fell in perfect unison. It certainly was a gallant show, yet to a Northerner there was one curious and noticeable

lack. A holiday crowd of twenty thousand men at a football match in Lancashire would rend a cloud in two with cheers and yells when the winning goal was made, but the vivas of a hundred thousand Italians sounded like the applause of a fashionable audience given to a fashionable opera in a fashionable house, as William II. swept by smiling and bowing to meet his brother monarch, King Humbert.

When the last barge had passed, the two lines of gondolas, in graceful curves, began to converge and follow in the wake of the disappearing convoy, and by the time the Emperor disembarked at the royal residence there was a floating procession that looked for all the world like a string of majestic black swans. Then, like logs unlocked in a jam when the freshets swell the rivers in Spring, the remaining boats were released, grinding each other's sides in the process of disintegration. The crowds dispersed, and I went for an hour to St. Mark's church to ruminate on what I had seen; to revive the past, and try to understand the times when Venice was the queen of the trading, and Titian the king of the artistic world. Dusk was falling as I came away, and at that moment the King and the Emperor appeared on a balcony overlooking the square. Their stay was brief, and I passed through to the narrow path that led to the side entrance of my inn, and I confess that, at the end of an exciting day, it looked invitingly homely and attractive. More than this, it was an inn of romance; full of mysterious nooks and corners, winding corridors, and shadowy rooms. Within its walls dark deeds had been done in secret that not even the winds dared to whisper abroad. Traditions lingered of young men ruined by sharpers at play, whose angry complaints were effectually silenced by a deftly aimed stiletto; and a tale was told of a jealous woman who brought her rival a nosegay, and the unsuspecting girl, burying her face in the artificially scented flowers, closed her eyes for ever, a victim to the hellish arts of the Borgias.

The house was full of company, and that night in the old pannelled dining saloon, I sat down to the most poetic dinner I ever enjoyed. Poetic I mean from association. We were in the fifteenth century. The furniture, the Venetian mirrors, the Murano glasses, the quaint goblets and wine flagons, the curiously fashioned sconces, the dim religious pictures,—all tended to confirm the fantasy.

The guests, from many lands, ultra modern as they were in dress and conversation, only needed a quick change from Japanese silk blouses and black coats to richly embroidered brocades, slashed velvet doublets and trunk hose, to transform them into mediæval signoras and cavaliers discussing bargains obtained on the Rialto, the assassination of a mutual friend, or the latest news of the doings of the Council of Ten. Each time the door opened I was disappointed to see a waiter carrying dishes from the kitchen, instead of a traveller from the land of Prester John, or an emissary bearing a summons from the dreaded Three. And the fanciful dream was finally dissolved by the aromatic smell of newly lit cigars.

Laughing and chattering the visitors adjourned for coffee to the terrace. This terrace, the width of the house, terminated at the steps leading to the water's edge, and resembled a well filled box at the theatre when the raised curtain reveals an elaborate stage effect. Startling in its theatrical beauty, it certainly was difficult to believe that the picture before us was not an hallucination.

For a few seconds the lively hubbub of conversation ceased, and then punctuated exclamations of admiration and delight in half a dozen languages expressed in diverse tones the emotions aroused by the unforgettable impressiveness of the scene.

It was night; a windless, cloudless Venetian night. At our feet the Grand Canal lapped and gurgled against the low parapet. Beyond stretched a broad belt of black water. Across this ebony band solitary gondolas, with scintillating points of light at prow and stern, flitted

hither and thither like fireflies in the gloom. Farther away again, where the Canal merged in the Lagoon, a regal pavilion, like the creation of an Eastern genii, was moored on the apparently motionless but gently undulating tide. Its dome and Moorish arches were hung with iridescent lamps that glowed like pendant emeralds, sapphires, rubys, and pearls; and behind that faëry palace the vague, vast darkness melted into illimitable space; and over all the eternal stars looked down with solemn eyes from the blue-black vault of heaven.

Awile we gazed on the charmed scene, and suddenly over the wide expanse we heard from the Imperial band stationed in the pavilion the first notes of "The Ride of the Valkyrie" pealing through the silent air. This was the signal for renewed excitement ashore and afloat; and the strains of music seemed to evolve a fleet of noiseless gondolas—each faintly illuminated by Chinese lanterns—that crossed and recrossed, forwards and backwards in bewildering and intricate movements, like a crowd of sable dancers performing a complicated figure in a darkened ballroom.

Many of the pleasure seekers in the Charonic-looking boats—one could easily imagine they were souls being ferried to the Shades—carried musical instruments, a mandolin, guitar, or banjo, and when the band of the Hohenzollern was not playing selections from German and Italian composers, songs of various nationalities, familiar to most of us, sounded near or far off, and awakened wistful memories of friends and home. An American at my side said to me: "Well, sir, I've often tried to size up the golden streets and golden harps, but I guess this is the nearest thing to heaven that I'm ever likely to see on this terrestrial ball."

As the hours wore away the sky overhead was pierced with soaring rockets, and reddened with flames and sparks that rose from a bonfire in St. Mark's square. But when midnight came the bonfire was a heap of grey ashes: the

illuminations were extinguished: the music had ceased: and the city was once more a haunt of sleep, and mystery, and dreams.

Next morning as I walked in the gay Piazza the pigeons were wheeling and fluttering down from roof and window to peck an early breakfast from outstretched hands; and when I turned the corner of the great towering Campanile "a light wind blew from the gates of the sun," and ruffled the surface of the sea into myriads of wavelets shining like ripples of liquid glass; but where had been the majestic ship and gorgeous pavilion was nothing but empty space.

Once, and only once since, has a transitory picture left such an indelible impression, and that was seen from the terrace of an inn near Lausanne. The terrace commands an open view of Lake Lemane and the whole range of Alps from the Dents du Midi to the Juras. On this particular night its resemblance in several aspects to the one just described was curious. It was about the same hour: a placid lake lay beneath us, and a goodly company were drinking after-dinner coffee in the open air. But, probably owing to the weather, every one was languid and listless, and little inclined to energetic conversation. A close, oppressive evening following a hot, sultry day, created an uneasy feeling of apprehension, as if we were in the shadow of an unknown impending doom.

Twilight had fallen, but except in the dusky hollows of the hills a sinister light in the West still left a pale coppery glare on the landscape. The moon was rising in the East, but was soon blotted out by a sullen ominous cloud creeping over the zenith to join a mass of lurid vapour already gathered together. I remember thinking at the time how greatly the cloud resembled a cloaked and hooded bravo stealing on his unsuspecting victim.

In less than a quarter of an hour the whole Alpine range was hidden behind an opaque curtain suspended

from heaven to earth. The stillness was unspeakable, like the pause preceding an earthquake. To relieve the tension I strolled awhile in the scented gloom of the garden—returned—sat down again—looked, and listened: and looked again.

A faint flash flickered on the wall of jet. Another and another followed in swift succession, darting like snaky tongues from every side of the mirky vault. At one moment the firmament was an illuminated expanse of incandescent light; the next instant it was a solid wall of darkness. A jagged dagger of violet ripped the inky veil from top to bottom, and through the V-shaped rift, for the thousandth part of a second, the roofs and spire of a distant village and church gleamed in the rays of the unseen moon. Out of the black depths a glowing ball burst in scorching arrows that shot down to meet the electric sparks that sprang with convulsive energy from the ground. So dazzling were the coruscations that it seemed as if an inverted volcano were raining streams of intolerable and never-ceasing fire. For four mortal hours the sky was scored from end to end with blinding, annihilating forks of flame, and the sublime grandeur of it all held me, fascinated and awe-stricken, till the last white flash of levin had ceased to be.

When the strange soundless storm was over, an incomparable transformation scene presented itself to my enraptured gaze. The house, the garden, the lake were still in deep gloom, but beyond the confines of shadow, fifty miles in extent, was revealed a cloudless azure heaven. And against the background of spotless blue the statuesque mountain peaks, robed in stainless moonlit snow, stood in unearthly beauty, like silent sentinels on the boundary of time and eternity.

From Switzerland to England is not a far cry even now, and ere long we shall probably be able by aerial flight to breakfast in Geneva and dine in London. But on swifter

wings of thought I am carried from a stifling August night at Ouchy, to a fresh dewy May evening in Shrewsbury.

We were a party of four, on a pilgrimage through the blossoming orchards of Hereford and Monmouth. One of the party had lived in America, and was hard to persuade that Nature could show anything fairer than the tinted glory of maple trees in the fall of the year. The inn whereto our wandering footsteps strayed was old, so old that I feel sure Sir John Falstaff took his ease therein after the immortal combat with Harry Hotspur; and I hope no base stickler for facts will flout me with the statement that the premises had no license till six months after the jovial roysterer's death: for it is a shrivelled soul that seeks to destroy a pleasant illusion when the truth is hatefully unwelcome.

During our one night's stay however, there were some substantial facts in the shapes of a dozen parsons who were attending a church convocation, and a jolly crew they proved to be, real human beings, when the waistcoats were unbuttoned, and the bottles had gone round; and long after the chimes of midnight ruddy faces loomed through wreathing smoke, and stories were told that did not lead to edification; but Boccaccian tales told under the rose by clerical lips should not be related from the house tops. Besides, I have forgotten them, every one.

But I have not forgotten the rapture of that idyllic Spring—the ecstasy of that mystic union with Nature which, like the blending of youth and hope, makes the heart leap with palpitating desire; nor shall I ever forget the halcyon days;—the cool, misty mornings: noons shimmering with heat:—and gloamings fanned by wandering winds from moor and sea, as we journeyed south through Stokesay, with its Anglo-Saxon-Norman castle, Ludlow, and Hereford, in that season of ideal weather.

In the drowsy vales the air was heavy with odours from the hedgerows and cottage gardens ablaze with old fashioned flowers; and in the midst of waves of bloom that rolled to the earth's last verge, the scattered homesteads stood like islands set in billowy foam.

As one of the objects of our quest was to listen to a nightingale's voice, whose song not one of the party had yet heard, we took a boat and sailed down the winding Wye to find the haunts of the magic bird, and for a long time we sought in vain. But we were in a realm of historic romance and antique beauty, and I have a memory of ancient castles, roofless abbeys, stately cathedrals, old halls, and crumbling ruins; and I hear once more, as in a trance, the whispering of vernal leaves, the humming of bees: the murmur of the stream: and the talk of tired rustics resting on benches in front of wayside inns when the labour of the day was done.

There were no exciting incidents during that charmed voyaging on the river of legend and tradition; but somewhere between Ross and Monmouth, after rushing down a reach of shallow rapids, we floated on a smooth, dark pool, and our deaf and dumb boatman, letting the oars swing on the pins, pointed with expressive gestures to the cascades we had left behind, then to the silent, treacherous looking pool below, and lastly, with uplifted eyes, to the sheer height of heaven.

We left our shallop at Tintern and there met authentic news of the elusive songster we had travelled so far to hear. A pretty waitress at the quaint inn told us that in a beech tree overshadowing the house a nightingale had been singing every night for three weeks from nine to eleven o'clock, and much to our astonishment averred she didn't like it because it kept her from going to sleep.

Accompanied by a friend, a local doctor, who knew the names and habits of every beast, bird, reptile, insect, tree, flower, and weed in the district, we spent the afternoon in

wandering through the embowering woods that shield the secluded valley from all the gales that blow. Like the maid, the doctor was amused at our eagerness to hear the threnody of a nightingale, and firmly refused to leave his comfortable chair when, as the clock struck nine, we went out in the dewy dimness and waited, in hushed expectancy, for the first notes of the plaintive evensong. Ten minutes passed; twenty, thirty, forty, and the profound silence remained unbroken. We spoke in whispers,—quite needlessly,—because a nightingale is not disturbed by noise, and when ten o'clock came and our long vigil was unrewarded, we were in despair. The red tip of a cigar, burning like the planet Mars, gleamed towards us from the gable of the inn, and the doctor in compassion, told us of sequestered spots in the woods where he thought our wishes might be gratified.

In Indian file we followed him on narrow paths, stumbling over roots, pushing through clumps of hazel, bending under obstructing boughs, lingering in dusky colonnades of aromatic pines. At a little clearing we stopped, and listened. A night-jar's voice, like a corn-crake and steel ratchet combined, sawed the brooding obscurity. An owl hooted from a distant barn: a fox stole like a shadow across the pathway: a dog barked a mile away. Sights and sounds innumerable, but never a singing sound of unseen Philomel. Far and wide we rambled in the shrouding shadows of umbrageous trees through that weird mysterious woodland on our nocturnal quest, but not a single note rewarded our patient curiosity; and when at parting we bade each other "Good Night," I, for one, retired to my room with an impression that the melodious inspirer of lyrical outpourings from immemorial time was only a fabled bird—a child of the imagination—a beautiful myth, born in the golden dawn, that the world will not willingly allow to die in its gray old age.

So thinking, with my face turned to the open lattice, I

fell at last into an uneasy slumber. How long the restless repose lasted I do not know; but I awoke with a confused sense of something occurring I could not name: a consciousness of tones I could not recognise, like words heard in a dream. Heavy with sleep, I tried to rouse myself to hearken. Was that a bird warbling? No, the quietness of the chamber was undisturbed. It must have been an illusion. To be quite sure I arose, and leaned out of the window. The balmy night, save for the lulling murmur of the rippling river far down the valley, was still as the grave. Then, from a hidden spray in the beech tree not many yards away the first clear notes of a divine voice gushed forth like the bubbles of a limpid spring. But how to describe that ravishing song is beyond my power, and words are altogether too feeble to express my spell-bound ecstasy as the strains rose higher and higher in the empyrean, and overflowed the sleeping earth.

It was a rain of crystal music, and the liquid notes fell on the enamoured air like a shower of melted pearls.

In the immense loneliness, when for a moment there was a pause in the passionate, entrancing song, it seemed as if, in all the universe, the invisible, sorrow-laden bird and I were the only beings left alive. In the song itself there was an undertone of unutterable longing, of unsatisfied love, and the last note of the little throbbing throat sounded like a sob of ineffable pain. As the last echo of it died away like the lament of a disembodied soul for all the unrequited affection and disappointment it had known on earth, I asked myself whether the adorable voice, exquisitely sad and sweet, were not the truest interpreter of what all men feel in their heart of hearts, but cannot express so well, even in the divinest poetry and song.

* * * * *

Next morning, when I opened my eyes, the world was flooded with sunshine: cheerful country sounds came from

the farm yard, and when over the breakfast table I related my experience, I was an object of envy to all my friends who had slept in prosaic peace while the inspired bird was filling heaven and earth with its melodious plaint. And when we took the open road to Chepstow and the gates of the West, the air was sparkling like wine, the skylarks were singing canticles of joy, and it felt good to be alive on the brave old earth, for we had crossed the threshold of a sacramental day.

JOHN BROWN OF HARPER'S FERRY: A RE-STUDY.*

By WILLIAM E. A. AXON.

A NEW life of John Brown whose execution for the raid at Harper's Ferry was the prologue to the sanguinary drama of the great American War of Secession might by many be considered needless, for there were a dozen in existence before Oswald Garrison Villard undertook the task. Yet there was a real need for this book, and its author may be congratulated on the fidelity, the industry, and the ability with which he has painted a full length portrait of one of the most wonderful figures in American history. Mr. Villard has left no effort untried to arrive at the truth, and in the course of fifty years evidence has accumulated that was not available at the earlier periods. Much manuscript material has been used, files of newspapers have been searched, and the biographies of contemporaries have been examined. Mr. Villard brings special qualifications to his task. He is known as a brilliant journalist, the son of Henry Villard, one of the able special correspondents of the Civil War, who founded the *New York Nation*. His mother, Fanny Garrison Villard, was the daughter of William Lloyd Garrison, whose paper, *The Liberator*, was for two generations the visible conscience of the American people warning them against the crime of slavery. If the American nation had listened to the voices of the prophets, to Garrison, to Wendell Phillips, to Lowell, Longfellow, Whittier—to name a few out of many—they would have

*"John Brown, 1800—1859. A biography fifty years after." By Oswald Garrison Villard, Litt.D., London, Constable & Co., 1910. 8vo, pp. xvi, 738. With portraits, facsimiles, and other illustrations.

been spared the long agony of their Civil War, the bloodiest struggle the world has ever seen.

When the North American Colonies succeeded in severing their connection with Great Britain, because a stupid king and his supple statesmen wished to tax them against their will, slavery seemed likely to die out. Some of the leaders of the Revolution, like Jefferson, felt and acknowledged the evil, but with strange inconsistency declared that all men are "born free and equal," and yet left negro slavery untouched by their constitution. Consequent upon the inventions of Arkwright and Cartwright in England and the later developments of the textile industry there was a great demand for cotton, and Whitney's invention made the Southern States the great source of supply. Negro labour was necessary for the production of the crop, and all claims of honesty and morality were pushed aside for the sake of the Almighty Dollar. When Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation was issued there were some four million slaves in the United States. The American nation, tried as other nations have tried, and do try, to serve both God and Mammon with equal fidelity. The poets and the prophets, the cranks and the reformers were on the side of liberty, but the mass of respectable people, headed by the practical men, merchants, and politicians, aided by the majority of the orthodox clergy, were opposed to the slightest breath of criticism of that "peculiar institution" of the South which made American pæans of freedom sound not only hypocritical but ridiculous in the ears of honest men. The geographical division of a free North and a slave South was one that made an armed conflict inevitable sooner or later, unless ethical or industrial considerations led to the abolition of slavery. The system of forced labour is always and everywhere economically wasteful. But there were plenty of sound divines ready to prove from the Bible that slavery—of course only negro slavery—was heaven-appointed, and plenty of able professors to show that slavery was a benefit

alike to the master and the slave. Most of the respectable Americans held that it was wrong to discuss slavery in the free states for fear of offending the slave states. And the South insisted on its right to "wallop its own niggers" without let or hindrance either from the inhabitants of the effete monarchies of the old world or from any of the despised Yankees. It must be said also that slavery was an evil inheritance from the period of English Colonial government.

John Brown was born at Torrington, Connecticut, May 9, 1800, and whilst his ancestry stretched back to the "Mayflower" his early life was spent in poverty and with few educational opportunities. The family moved to Ohio in 1805 and he led the life of a pioneer, where he learned something of woodcraft, and a great deal about animals. The Indians also came under his observation, and he even learned a little of their language. At twelve years of age he was able to lead a company of cattle on a journey a hundred miles from his home, and "he would have thought his character much injured had he been obliged to be helped in any such job." It was on one of these journeys that his hatred of slavery was first aroused. He was staying at a tavern "the gentlemanly landlord" of which made a great pet of him, whilst a negro lad whom John knew to be active, intelligent and of good feeling was badly clothed, badly fed, badly lodged and beaten with iron shovels or anything that came handy. This led John Brown to swear eternal war against slavery and the oath was most faithfully kept at all risks—even to the gallows. His education was scanty, and "the books which influenced him" were chiefly the Bible and the "Columbian Reciter,"—the latter a book on which many fluent orators have been nourished. Brown had aspirations for higher education, but his dreams of Amherst College and the ministry were defeated by an inflammation of the eyes. He was a tanner, and an expert at his trade. His marriage with Dianthe Lusk brought him

seven children, and his early views of their training were severely patriarchal. But if his rule was strict it was just and he had the affection and devotion of his children. Later his views changed and made him gentler and more considerate in his dealings with the young. He was a strict Sunday Sabbatarian and attached himself to the Temperance movement in its early days. After the death of his first wife he married Mary Anne Day, who bore him thirteen children and was in every way a true and faithful helpmeet to him in a life of much hardship and many struggles. He helped to organise a Congregational Church at Richmond, Pennsylvania, and became a Freemason. Then there occurred the curious Morgan episode which led to Brown's withdrawal from the order. It was said that William Morgan had threatened to reveal the secrets of Masonry and that he was murdered in consequence. This affair passed into politics and on one fervid candidate being reproached with the fact that the alleged corpse had never been identified replied in the true spirit of the "practical politician" that these uncertain remains of humanity formed "a good enough Morgan" for him. On such doubtful foundations are many flamboyant perorations built. Brown moved into Ohio and speculated in land purchase with disastrous results, but was more successful as a shepherd and dealer in wool. His business career was not as a whole prosperous, and while there was apparently no intentional dishonesty on his part there are some transactions which have an unhappy aspect.

His dreams of a plan for the forcible overthrow of slavery began somewhere in the forties, though at an earlier period he was planning for the education of the negroes, and had not realised that the prejudice against the teaching of the negro was almost as strong in the North as in the South. He revisited his native place and going into the schoolhouse he asked the boys "Where is Africa"? "It is on the other side of the ocean, of course," replied one of the pupils. "Why, 'of course,'"

he further asked, and the boy 'of course' could not tell. Then Brown spoke to them of Africa, the villainies of the slave trade and the wrongs of the American negro. "How many of you boys will agree to use your influence, whatever it may be, against this great curse when you grow up?" They all held up their hands. He was afraid some might forget it and continued: "Now I want those who are quite sure that they will not forget it, who will promise to use their time and influence towards this evil to rise." Then only two stood up and received his blessing. One of these was afterwards known in warfare as General Henry Beebee Carrington, who in after years told the story. In the forties Brown came into contact with Frederick Douglass, a mulatto, slave-born, who became one of the most wonderful orators even in America which is and was a land of oratory. Douglass also became infected with a sense of the hopelessness of any peaceable solution of the negro question. Once when speaking on this subject at Salem, Ohio, he expressed his fear that slavery could only be destroyed by bloodshed. He was sharply interrupted by that negro prophetess, Sojourner Truth, with the question "Frederick, is God dead?" "No," he answered, "and because God is not dead slavery can only end in blood." By 1846 Brown was settled in Springfield, Massachusetts, as a wool merchant, and came among the Boston abolitionists, but had little sympathy with Garrison, who was even then as pronounced a non-resistant as Tolstoy was in these later days. Brown's Calvinistic training led to his conviction that without shedding of blood there is no remission of sin and he heartily endorsed the idea of propaganda by "Beecher's Bibles,"—the playful name sometimes given to Sharpe's rifles. Brown obtained the signatures of many negroes to resolutions to resist the fugitive slave law by force and to "shoot to kill."

His experience as a wool merchant included a trip to Europe where he had glimpses of London, Paris, Hamburg

and Waterloo. What he saw of military matters in this short visit to the old world furnished some of the arguments on which he based his own plans of warfare in later years.

Leaving the wool business, in which he had no skill as a merchant though an excellent judge of the staple, he removed to North Elba in the Adirondack Mountains, where Gerrit Smith, the well-known abolitionist and philanthropist had offered to give 120,000 acres of that northern region of the State of New York for the settlement of suitable negro families. Such as came had a very poor welcome from the white settlers already there. Brown helped and defended the Blacks as far as he could from the cupidity and injustice of the Whites. Owing to the business entanglements with his partner in the wool trade Brown whilst retaining his mountain farms moved to Akron, but in 1855 went back to North Elba where some of his family remained until after his death.

We now come to the struggle in Kansas which made John Brown's name one of terror and loathing among the Southern slaveholders and their servile political adherents in the North. There had been great controversy as to the admission of Missouri as a Slave State in 1821, and it was then agreed as a compromise that all the North of 36° 30' lat. Louisiana Purchase except Missouri should be free. This compromise was grossly violated by the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 by which slavery was left an open question to be decided by the settlers. The slave holders wanted Kansas both for political and economical reasons. "Bleeding Kansas" was for years the scene of a continual struggle between the forces of freedom and of slavery. When it was to be organized as a territory thousands of Missourians went over the border, and, having recorded their votes as citizens of Kansas, returned to their homes in the conviction that they had again outwitted the Yankees. The Northern settlers refused to acknowledge the bogus Legislature thus set up, and

elected another. There were rival organisations, rival governors, and rival officials of all kinds. The result was virtually a Civil War. The then President of the United States was Franklin Pierce, the only holder of that office whose campaign biography was written by a man of genius,—his friend Nathaniel Hawthorne,—and *he*, alas, was almost the only one of the American “intellectuals” who failed to make a protest against slavery. One of Pierce’s neighbours said of him “Frank’s all right for this neighbourhood but he’ll be mighty thin when he’s spread over the map of the United States.” Although the Shawnee Legislature was elected by an enormous mass of fraudulent votes its legality was sustained by President and Congress. Northern emigrants were aided by societies of Free Soil or Abolitionist sympathies, and there were repeated invasions from the South. John Brown’s son, John, preceded him as a settler in Kansas, and wrote for his help and for arms with which the Free Soilers could defend themselves. John Brown soon joined his sons at Osawatimie, but his purpose from the first was not farming but war along the Kansas-Missouri border for the release of slaves. He was prepared if need arose to take either the property or the lives of the Border Ruffians in this struggle. There was ample justification for resistance by the Free Soilers. One of their number was shot from behind for the sole reason that he had visited Lawrence which was their central place. “I have sent another of those damned Abolitionists to his winter quarters,” said Major George E. Clarke, but the honour of the murder was also claimed by Colonel James N. Burns. Both had fired at the same time. The Postmaster of Westport, Missouri, by the grace of the pro-slavery men, was also Sheriff of Kansas when the Free Soil newspaper offices were sacked, and the types, presses and books thrown into the river. The Free State Hotel was cannonaded, and as it burst into flames, “This,” said the Sheriff—appointed it must be remembered by the Law and Order Party, and

not even a citizen of the State—"This is the happiest moment of my life." These outrages and lawless proceedings led to reprisals, and among these stand out in tragic force the murders on the Potawatomie which will ever be the red stain on John Brown's character. The outrages on the Free Soilers led to the determination to strike a blow which should terrify the Border Ruffians. It was the method of fighting fire with fire—not always effective physically and even less frequently so in the domain of morals. By a strange coincidence as Brown's men were considering the necessity of retaliation there came to them the news of the brutal assault on Charles Sumner in the Senate by Preston Brooks, who came behind his chair and felled him with a blow from a heavy cane—a brutal deed hailed by the South with rapturous applause. "Something must be done to show these barbarians that we too have rights," said John Brown, and the something was to seize five men in their houses in the middle of the night and put them to death by cutlass strokes and a useless pistol shot. Brown himself took no part in the killing, but he organized, directed, and approved of it. His subsequent denial of having done the killing was at once technically accurate and at the same time quite misleading. His son Jason, who had a horror of bloodshed, told him as soon as he heard, that it was an uncalled for and wicked act. "God is my judge," Brown replied, "It was absolutely necessary as a measure of self-defence and for the defence of others." Most if not all of these murdered men were worthless creatures, but this short shrift without even the pretence of a trial, however informal, shocked many who sympathised with the Free Soilers, and did not have the effect of stopping outrages. The Potawatomie murders were perpetrated on the night between May 24-25, 1856. Two years later, May 19, 1858, the Border Ruffian, Charles A. Hamilton, caused eleven peaceable Free Soil Settlers at Marais des Cygnes to stand in a row to be shot by his men; five were

killed, five were wounded; the only man who escaped saved himself by pretending to be shot and, falling to the ground with the others, was therefore thought to be dead. The Potawatomie massacre did not stop outrages but it deprived the Free Soilers of the claim which up to that time they had truthfully made of acting solely on the defensive.

Brown's sons, John and Jason, were arrested by a band of Border Ruffians under the Rev. Martin White, who was probably the most sanguinary preacher that ever stood in a pulpit. He it was who in August 1856, shot Frederick Brown. "The same day," he wrote, "that I shot Fred I would have shot the last devil of the gang that was in the attack on my house, if I had known them and had got the chance." When later John Brown "got the chance" of shooting White he spared him. It is not necessary to follow all the entanglements of the struggle in "Bleeding Kansas." In spite of all the influence of the Federal Government and the advantage of the South in its closer proximity, the Free Soilers won in the end, and when Kansas was admitted to the Union in 1861 it was as a Free State. In the Civil War which so quickly followed Kansas sent 20,000 men to the Federal army out of a population of 100,000.

John Brown's last work in Kansas was characteristic. After a journey in the Eastern states he returned disguised as "Shubel Morgan," and made a raid into Missouri where in December 1858, he and his men took some slaves who desired liberty and some other pro-slavery property. One man in defending his 'right' to hold another man as a slave was slain. The fourteen negroes reached Canada safely. The President of the United States offered a reward of \$250 for the apprehension of Brown and Montgomery, another Free Soil leader, and the Governor of Missouri, richer or more extravagant, offered \$3,000 for the arrest of Brown alone. He read these posters on the walls of Cleveland where his public

lecture was reported by a then young pressman now known to fame as Artemus Ward. Here also he sold some horses to which he could give no sound title. "They are abolition horses," he said, "I converted them." All this time, in all these years of harass and pecuniary struggles he had nourished the vision of a swift, direct, dramatic onslaught on slavery. The Kansas episodes of guerilla warfare were but a prelude to this intended attack. His magnetic influence on those with whom he came into contact caused even men of sober judgment, such as Gerrit Smith, to think that he might become the Moses who should lead the negroes from their worse than Egyptian bondage. With none does he appear to have discussed the strategic problems involved in his plans. And strange as it may seem, he who despised what he described as the mere talk of the Abolitionists, does not seem to have even worked out the details of the scheme in his own mind. To go to some plantations, free the slaves and take them to the mountains where they could maintain a guerilla warfare if pursued was the general idea of his intended attack on the 'domestic institution' of the South. Beyond that the plan does not appear to have been elaborated. His friends in the North did not know where this first blow was to be struck. What they did know was that he was going in defiance of the American Constitution and of the laws of one or other of the Slave States to make an effort to free the slaves by force. Money was slowly collected, arms bought, and a band of men gathered round him. This invading army consisted of just twenty-one men and their captain John Brown. Among them were his three sons, Oliver, Owen and Watson. Five members of the army were negroes. Nineteen of them had not reached their thirtieth year. Such was the military force that proposed to attack an arsenal of the Federal Government and to wage war on the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Americans have a talent for the manufacture of constitutions and like to perform even

illegal acts decently and in order. So whilst staying at the Kennedy Farm, Maryland, a provisional constitution was drawn up. The Provisional Army of twenty-one men with its Commander-in-Chief, John Brown, started for Harper's Ferry on Sunday night, October 9, 1859. The advance guard of two passed from Maryland by a bridge no longer in existence and seized the watchman who at first laughed at this as a practical joke. The armoury was about sixty yards from the bridge and there another watchman was taken prisoner. Four more of the army proceeded by the Bolivar Heights to the house of Col. Lewis Washington, a great grand-nephew of the first President of the United States, and like him a slaveholder. They brought him down to Harper's Ferry, prisoner and hostage, and with him the sword which tradition said was given by Frederick the Great to George Washington, and this symbol of conquering freedom was placed in the care of Osborn Anderson, one of the negro soldiers of the miniature army, and was worn by Brown in the following fight. Washington, and another slave owner, Allstadt, were thus brought from their homes; their slaves armed with pikes were placed as guards, but no effort at escape was made. The first man to be killed was the negro baggage-master of the station. Truly an evil omen. A train was stopped for a time, but in a little while was allowed to proceed, and by seven o'clock on Monday morning the astounding intelligence flashed over the wires that Harper's Ferry was in the hands of insurgents, and that the leader had declared their mission to be that of freeing the slaves. Meanwhile Dr. John D. Starry had sent messengers in various directions, had the Lutheran Church bell sounded to call the citizens together, and rushed off to Charlestown to hurry the advent of Captain Rowan and his company of volunteers. Brown and his men made prisoners of the employees at the arsenal as they came to their work. There was ample time for Brown to have retreated to the mountains with his prisoners as hostages, and this was pressed upon him but

he delayed, as he said after, out of consideration for Washington and his other prisoners. Meanwhile troops of various kinds were coming to the scene, including a company of marines from Washington. Colonel Robert E. Lee with Lieut. J. E. B. Stuart were sent by President Buchanan and overtook the marines a mile and a half from Harper's Ferry. Brown and such of his men as had not already been killed were with their prisoners cooped up in one of the engine houses. By two o'clock next morning Lee sent Stuart to demand the unconditional surrender of the raiders. When the door was partly opened for a parley Stuart recognised in "Smith" as the leader of the raiders was then called, the famous Kansas leader John Brown. Then Lee offered the honour of attacking to the Maryland and to the Virginian Volunteers whose officers thankfully declined, and the Marines after hammering with sledge hammers at the heavy doors used a ladder as a battering-ram. They were soon forced, Lieut. Green rushed in, and, as Washington said "This is Osawatomie," attacked Brown with a slight service sword and wounded him severely in the head with his blows. Had Green been wearing his regulation sabre Brown would certainly have been killed. As the marines followed their officer one of them was killed by a shot from the raiders, but they rushed on and two of the raiders perished by bayonet thrusts. The invasion of the Provisional Army of twenty-one men was at an end.

Nothing remained to be done but the trial of John Brown and his associates. He was brought into court from day to day lying wounded on a pallet-bed. All the forms of law were complied with. The trial from the Virginia standpoint was absolutely fair, but it could only have one possible conclusion. Both before and after his condemnation Brown had many visitors, and his conversations with them were reported at great length in the press and were excellent propaganda work for the cause of freedom. John Brown was more than a match in controversy for the wily politicians who hoped to entrap him into some

declaration that would involve their political opponents as sharers in the plot. "Upon what principle do you justify your acts?" asked one, and the reply was "Upon the Golden Rule. I pity the poor in bondage that have none to help them; that is why I am here; not to gratify any personal animosity, revenge or vindictive spirit. It is my sympathy with the oppressed and the wronged that are as good as you and as precious in the sight of God." But he drew the line at pro-slavery parsons, and they were then as numerous as an army with banners. Norval Wilson, a Methodist minister, called and proposed to pray with him. "Mr. Wilson," asked Brown, "do you believe in slavery?" "I do," he replied, "Under the present circumstances." "Then," said the prisoner, "I do not want your prayers. I don't want the prayers of any man that believes in slavery." His trial began October 25, on November 2nd he was sentenced to be hanged and he was executed on December 2, 1859. There were many comments on the Harper's Ferry affair, both serious and grotesque. On one occasion Thaddeus Stevens sat with Mr. F. E. Spinner at the Relay House, when Governor Wise and Senator Mason were indulging in some talk which was not pleasant to Northern ears. Mr. Spinner said it was a pity that Brown had been made a martyr by hanging. Stevens replied, in a loud voice, for the benefit of the Virginia Statesmen, "No, sir, he ought to have been hung for attempting to capture Virginia with a dozen white men, five negroes and an old cow. Why sir he ought to have taken at least thirty men to have conquered Virginia" (p. 505). A Southern Senator, Robert Toombs, said: "Defend yourselves! The enemy is at your door, wait not to meet him at your hearthstone; meet him at the doorsill, and drive him from the temple of liberty, or pull down its pillars and involve him in a common ruin" (p. 504). A Temple of Liberty in which there were four million slaves! There were other comments. "Let the American State hang his body and the American Church damn his soul," wrote Theodore Parker, "Still the bles-

sing of such as are ready to perish will fall on him, and the universal justice of the Infinitely Perfect God will make him welcome home. The road to heaven is as short from the gallows as from the throne" (p. 564). Victor Hugo wrote "In killing Brown the Southern States have committed a crime which will take its place amongst the calamities of history. The rupture of the Union will fatally follow the assassination of Brown. As to Brown he was an apostle and a martyr" (p. 509).

As John Brown left the prison cell he handed to one who stood near this message to his countrymen:—

I, John Brown, am now quite certain that the crimes of this guilty land will never be purged away, but by blood. I had, as I now think, vainly flattered myself that without very much bloodshed it might be done.

This was the sure word of prophecy.

Whatever faults John Brown had committed, whatever blunders he had made, were forgotten as men saw the homely yet heroic figure standing with undaunted courage on the scaffold, a man ready to die for his lowly, oppressed and helpless brethren. The spirit is stronger than the flesh, or the sword, and John Brown dead was mightier than the living man had ever been. His very name became a battle cry. When in 1861 the bloody struggle which he had prophesied began then from the grave of John Brown sprang the martial music that finally led the Northern men to the victory of Freedom over Slavery which was expressed in that State paper written by Abraham Lincoln—a scrap of paper which converted four million of human chattels into free men. Nor is his influence exhausted, nor can it be, for so long as

The stars of heaven are looking kindly down
On the grave of old John Brown

so long men and women who sympathise with the oppressed or who are called to help a righteous cause that is unpopular, will feel the inspiration of his life—and of his death.

